SEPTEMBER 2014 VOLUME 24 ISSUE 9

BFI

THE INTERNATIONAL FILM MAGAZINE

Sight&Sound

THE GREATEST DOCUMENTARIES OF ALL TIME

£4.50

09

9 770037 480090

AS VOTED BY MORE THAN 300 CRITICS AND FILMMAKERS

PLUS

- KELLY REICHARDT'S 'NIGHT MOVES'
- THE DARDENNES ON 'TWO DAYS, ONE NIGHT'
- THE UNSEEN 'TWIN PEAKS: FIRE WALK WITH ME'
- DAVID MICHOD'S 'THE ROVER'

The definitive 2014 restoration of the first true horror film, the 1920 silent expressionist masterpiece.

Robert Wiene's

Das Cabinet des Dr. Caligari.

EUREKA! www.mastersofcinema.org

The Masters of Cinema Series

AVAILABLE FROM amazon.co.uk

In cinemas nationwide 29th August
On Blu-ray & DVD 29th September

Contents September 2014

Woman on the verge

Jean-Pierre and Luc Dardenne's *Two Days, One Night* follows a factory worker's attempts to save her job. The directors talk to **Isabel Stevens** about the creative benefits of not giving a damn

REGULARS

5 **Editorial** Eyes wide open

Rushes

6 **Isabel Stevens** on the work of German film poster designer Hans Hillmann
8 **Object Lesson: Hannah McGill** on bones
9 **The five key...** jewel thief movies
11 **Pasquale Iannone** on the TV version of Italian mafia saga *Gomorrah*
13 **Dispatches: Mark Cousins** on the non-Western documentary film canon

The Industry

14 **Development Tale: Charles Gant** on *Hector and the Search for Happiness*
15 **The Numbers: Charles Gant** reports on the surprise box-office success of Richard Linklater's *Boyhood*
17 **Brewster: Ben Roberts** on the arthouse circuit outside the M25

Festivals

18 **James Bell** visits Bologna's Il Cinema Ritrovato festival
20 **Neil Young** reports from the boldly unorthodox FIDMarseille festival

Wide Angle

68 **Jason Anderson** on a defiant new crop of American independent filmmakers
70 **Soundings: Frances Morgan** on the sonic terrain of the western
71 **Primal Screen: Bryony Dixon** on the German director Gerhard Lamprecht
72 **Melissa Gronlund** explores the work of artist filmmaker Ed Atkins

127 **Letters**

Endings

128 **Michael Brooke** on *The Thin Blue Line*

FEATURES

22
COVER FEATURE: Tall truths

What are the greatest documentaries ever made? We polled 340 critics, programmers and filmmakers in the search for authoritative answers. **Nick Bradshaw** introduces the results and we present the votes and thoughts of 100 of our respondents, including Joshua Oppenheimer, Walter Salles, Penny Woolcock, James Toback, Asif Kapadia and Paul Greengrass. PLUS **Charlotte Cook** on how documentary filmmakers have stepped in to fill the gap as traditional media shies away from investigative reporting in the internet age, and **Robert Greene** explores how the past 15 years have been a golden age for bold, adventurous documentary filmmaking.

56
The dam busters

A trio of green activists find themselves in deep water after plotting to blow up a dam in Kelly Reichardt's environmental thriller *Night Moves*. **Nick James** introduces the film, while Reichardt discusses the meaning of radicalism and the dangers of moral certainties with **David Jenkins**

60
Poetry in motion

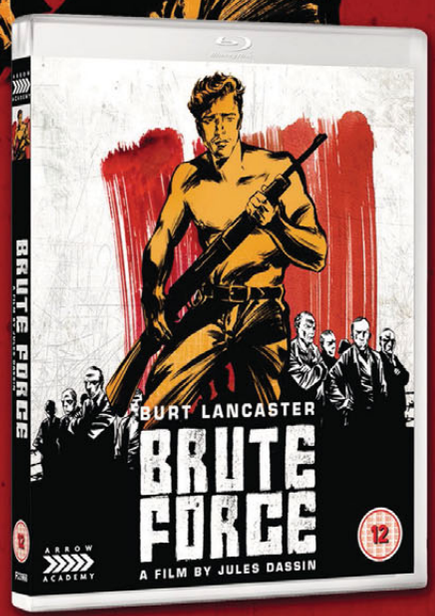
In 1963, as the auteurists were claiming ascendancy in the UK, critic Raymond Durgnat was swimming against the tide in the pages of *Motion* magazine, helping transform film culture with his far-sighted advocacy of films such as *Peeping Tom* and *Black Sunday*. By **Henry K. Miller**

PHOTOGRAPHY BY FABRIZIO MALTESE

BURT LANCASTER

BRUTE FORCE

A FILM BY JULES DASSIN

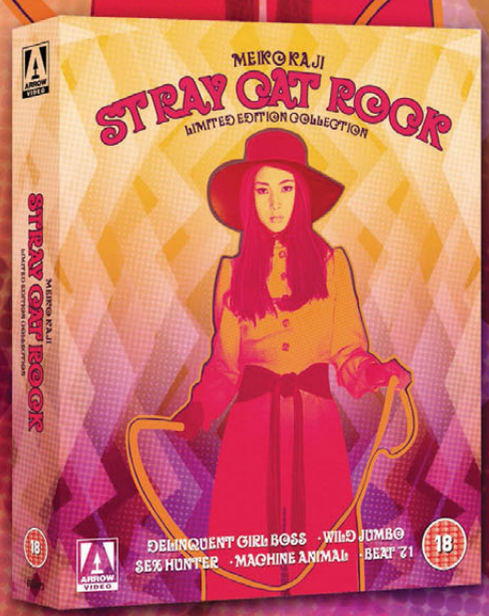


MEIKO KAJI

STRAY CAT ROCK

LIMITED EDITION COLLECTION

DELINQUENT GIRL BOSS
WILD JUMBO
SEX HUNTER
MACHINE ANIMAL
BEAT '71



DELUXE DVD & BLU-RAY EDITIONS AVAILABLE THIS AUGUST AND SEPTEMBER

SHOP DIRECT FROM THE ARROW STORE AND EARN REWARD POINTS TO BE USED ON FUTURE PURCHASES!*
WWW.ARROWFILMS.CO.UK/SHOP

/ArrowVideo @ArrowFilmsVideo /ArrowVideoUK www.arrowfilms.co.uk

*For every £1 you spend per item, we'll give you 10 reward points. 10 reward points = 10 pence. Reward points can be used at any time against future purchases.

Sight&Sound

(incorporating Monthly Film Bulletin)
Published monthly by the BFI

Editorial enquiries
21 Stephen Street London W1T 1LN
t: 020 7255 1444
f: 020 7580 5830
w: bfi.org.uk/sightandsound
e: S&S@bfi.org.uk

Social media
f: facebook.com/SightSoundmag
t: twitter.com/SightSoundmag

Subscriptions
t: 020 8955 7070
e: sightandsound@abacusemedia.com
Volume 23 Issue 9 (NS)
ISSN 0037-4806 USPS 496-040

CONTRIBUTORS

Jason Anderson is a Toronto-based film critic

Michael Brooke is a freelance film critic and historian, and a DVD and Blu-ray producer at Arrow Films

Charlotte Cook is director of programming at the Hot Docs Canadian International Documentary Festival

Bryony Dixon is curator of silent film at the BFI National Archive

Robert Greene is a filmmaker and critic. He writes the monthly 'Unfiction' column for the *Sight & Sound* website

Melissa Gronlund is a writer based in London and a co-editor of *Afterall* journal

Pamela Hutchinson writes about film at silentlondon.co.uk

Pasquale Iannone is a film academic and critic based in Edinburgh

Alexander Jacoby lectures on Japanese film at Oxford Brookes University. He is the author of *A Critical Handbook of Japanese Film Directors*

David Jenkins is the editor of *Little White Lies*

Trevor Johnston is a freelance film critic and writer

Henry K. Miller is the editor of *The Essential Raymond Durgnat*, published in early September by BFI/Palgrave Macmillan

Frances Morgan is deputy editor of *The Wire*

Nathalie Morris is curator of special collections at the BFI National Archive

Kim Newman's new book *An English Ghost Story* is published in October

Jasper Sharp is the co-editor of the Japanese film website MidnightEye.com, and author of *Behind the Pink Curtain*

Neil Young is a film critic and programmer

COVER

Cover design & art direction by Why Not Associates
Photography by Rocco Redondo

NEXT ISSUE

on sale 9 September

Contents Reviews

FILMS OF THE MONTH

68 *Lilting*
70 *The Rover*
72 *Wakolda*

FILMS

82 *All This Mayhem*
82 *The Anomaly*
83 *Art Party*
83 *Blood Ties*
84 *The Congress*
85 *Dawn of the Planet of the Apes*
86 *Delight*
86 *Deliver Us from Evil*
87 *Dinosaur 13*
88 *Finding Fela*
89 *Goddess*
89 *God Help the Girl*
90 *God's Pocket*
91 *Goltzius and the Pelican Company*
92 *The Grand Seduction*
92 *A Haunted House 2*
93 *Heaven Is for Real*
93 *Humshakals*
94 *The Internet's Own Boy*
94 *The Keeper of Lost Causes*
95 *Moebius*
96 *Mrs. Brown's Boys D'Movie*
96 *Mystery Road*
98 *Night Moves*
99 *The Notorious Mr. Bout*
99 *Obvious Child*
100 *The Police Officer's Wife*
101 *Pudsey the Dog The Movie*
101 *The Purge Anarchy*
102 *Seve*
102 *Tammy*
104 *Transformers Age of Extinction*
105 *Two Days, One Night*
106 *The Unbeatables*
107 *Walking on Sunshine*
107 *We Gotta Get Out of This Place*
107 *Welcome to New York*
108 *What If*

HOME CINEMA

112 *Birds, Orphans and Fools, Faust, Five Golden Dragons, Frau im Mond, Harold and Maude, The Chris Marker Collection, The Essential Jacques Tati Blu-Ray Collection, Too Late Blues, I vinti, Zulu*

DVD features

110 **Trevor Johnston** on John Guillermin's wonderful coming-of-age tale *Rapture*
113 **Kim Newman** sees previously unseen footage deepen the enigma of David Lynch's *Twin Peaks – The Entire Mystery*
114 **Alexander Jacoby** on Suzuki Seijun's fresh blast of Japanese postmodernist cool, *Branded to Kill*

Television

116 *Colin's Sandwich, The Irwin Allen Collection*

BOOKS

120 **Pamela Hutchinson** on a fascinating look at the complex life of Hollywood star Ann Dvorak
121 **Jasper Sharp** is impressed by two recent studies of Japanese cinema
122 **Nathalie Morris** on a new study of costume and fashion in cinema
122 **Nick James** on two beautiful booklets from Univocal Publishing

70

84

108

106

And online this month Documentary Poll videos by Mark Cousins, Robert Greene, kogonada and Kevin B. Lee, plus the full poll live on 14 August bfi.org.uk/sight-sound-magazine/greatest-docs

VINTAGECLASSICS

STUDIOCANAL

RE-DISCOVER ARTHUR RANSOME'S TIMELESS CLASSIC

DIGITALLY RESTORED ON BLU-RAY™ FOR THE FIRST TIME

EXTRAS

★ INTERVIEWS with Sophie Neville, Suzanna Hamilton and Virginia McKenna
★ LOCATIONS FEATURETTE – With thanks to Bank Ground Farm www.bankground.com
★ BEHIND THE SCENES FOOTAGE with commentary from Sophie Neville
★ STILLS GALLERY ★ TRAILER

ORDER NOW amazon.co.uk®

Free Super Saver Delivery and Unlimited One-Day Delivery with Amazon Prime are available on eligible orders. Terms and Conditions apply. See Amazon.co.uk for details.

ALSO AVAILABLE IN THE COLLECTION

MadeInBritainFilm

EDITORIAL
Editor
Nick James
Deputy editor
Kieron Corless
Features editor
James Bell
Web editor
Nick Bradshaw
Production editor
Isabel Stevens
Acting chief sub-editor
Jamie McLeish
Sub-editors
Robert Hanks
Jane Lamacraft
Ben Walters
John Wrathall
Researchers
Mar Diestro-Dópido
Pippa Selby
Credits supervisor
Patrick Fahy
Credits associate
Kevin Lyons
Pieter Sonke
James Piers Taylor
Design and art direction
chrisbrawndesign.com
Origination
Altaimage
Printer
Wyndeham Group

BUSINESS
Publisher
Rob Winter
Publishing coordinator
Brenda Fernandes
Advertising consultant
Ronnie Hackston
T: 020 7957 8916
M: 07799 605 212
F: 020 7436 2327
E: ronnie.hackston@bfi.org.uk
Newsstand distribution
Comag Specialist
T: 01895 433800
Bookshop distribution
Central Books
T: 020 8986 4854

Sight & Sound (ISSN 0037-4806) is published monthly by British Film Institute, 21 Stephen Street, London W1T 1LN and distributed in the USA by Mail Right Int., 1637 Stelton Road B2, Piscataway, NJ 08854
Periodicals Postage Paid at Piscataway, NJ and additional mailing offices
POSTMASTER: Send address changes to Sight and Sound c/o Mail Right International Inc. 1637 Stelton Road B2, Piscataway NJ 08854

Subscription office:
For subscription queries and sales of back issues and binders contact:
Subscription Department
Sight & Sound
Abacus e-Media
3rd Floor Chancery Exchange
10 Furnival Street, London, EC4A 1AB
T: 020 8955 7070
F: 020 8421 8244
E: sightandsound@abacusemedia.com

Annual subscription rates:
UK £45, Eire and ROW £68
£10 discount for BFI members

Copyright © BFI, 2014

The views and opinions expressed in the pages of this magazine or on its website are those of the author(s) and are not necessarily those of the BFI or its employees. The contents of this magazine may not be used or reproduced without the written permission of the Publisher.

The BFI is a charity, (registration number 287780), registered at 21 Stephen St, London, W1T 1LN

Editorial Nick James

EYES WIDE OPEN

Recently I was asked to watch film material, parts of which I had seen once before on Channel 4 in the 1980s, images of a kind that I rather wished I didn't have to see again: the footage shot by Allied soldiers as they liberated the death and slave-labour camps of Germany's Third Reich.

You might think such imagery is inescapable, indelible, that we're all familiar, for instance, with the sequence of the British army bulldozer driver at Belsen having to shift a pile of emaciated cadavers, which then move uncannily as if they've come alive again – it's shown in many films about the Holocaust. But what I'm referring to is less well-known material from the many camps that were documented after they were liberated. All such footage as could be found was gathered together towards the end of the war by Sidney Bernstein for a documentary that he did not complete – but which has recently been reconstructed by a team from the Imperial War Museum – called *German Concentration Camps Factual Survey*. The film had been intended primarily for the German population so they could be shown what had been done in their name.

My reluctance to see the footage amounted to the following: I did not want either to experience the same emotions, or have the film's original effect on me diminished by repetition, or worse, find that the images no longer affected me in the same way. Nor did I want to be returned to the origin of the feelings of hatred many of my generation felt towards that generation of Germans who perpetrated those crimes.

But I did watch the footage again. It's in André Singer's new documentary *Night Will Fall*, which is about the making of Bernstein's film and of the need for a visual record of acts of true horror. In the same week of the screening, gruesome images were everywhere in the media. Body bags were being flown back to Eindhoven from the Ukraine; one Palestinian child was reckoned to be dying every hour in Gaza. And – to be more trivial for a moment – it was not long after many British people had felt free enough from old enmities to celebrate the German victory in the World Cup.

It was the same week, too, that we finished putting together this Documentary Poll issue. Among the top films are, of course, *Shoah*, Claude Lanzmann's interview-based uncovering of what happened in the camps – which eschews the use of footage – and *Night and Fog*, Alain Resnais's understated

The mass burials in pits at Belsen are horrific to watch. But our best chance against such events being repeated is looking and understanding. You must look – you cannot not look

chronological history, which relies on footage. Their presence demonstrates not only their monumental power as films, but also that approaches to reflecting on the unthinkable need not stick to one tack.

Indeed, despite my squeamishness, I am not averse to artworks that challenge the inviolability of this imagery. Take, for instance, Jake and Dinos Chapman's *Hell* series, diorama models that conflate Nazi crimes with barbarities from other times and from popular culture. They help us to see that the Holocaust is not the anomaly in human history that it should be, and that even that period of history can become a commodity – look how successful the morbid WWII sections of bookshops are.

The same night I watched *Night Will Fall*, the BBC's *Newsnight* broadcast a debate about the corporation's practice of obscuring (or blobbing out) the faces of the injured and dead of a war zone. Later in the week, the *Guardian* published Roger Tooth's article 'Graphic content: when photographs of carnage are too upsetting to publish', about the moral decisions picture editors have to make. "We wanted to show the readers the reality of life – and death – in Gaza, but we didn't want to shock or unnecessarily upset them," Tooth wrote.

I sympathise with that, and responsible choices of images do need to be made, especially when there's so much uncensored material available on the internet. But surely the one obvious lesson of the Israel-Palestine conflict is that anything you publish is bound to offend someone. For me, to show a swaddled injured baby while obscuring its head, as the BBC has been doing, is pointless. The Arts Council head Peter Bazalgette was right to question that practice on *Newsnight*.

For the record, it's the mass burials in pits at Belsen that I find most difficult to watch. But our best chance against such events being repeated is looking and understanding. You must look – you cannot not look. So please seek out *Night Will Fall* when it's released in September. It will not make for a pleasant evening, but it is all about bearing witness to the fact that things like this really happened – and are happening still. And that's part of what documentary is all about.

ILLUSTRATION BY SIMON COOPER AT WWW.COOPERILLO.COM

IN THE FRAME

ENIGMA VARIATIONS

The children of Marx and Coca-Cola: Jean-Luc Godard's *Masculin Féminin* (1966)

From the 50s to the 70s, some of Europe's greatest directors courted the German artist Hans Hillmann to make posters for their films

By Isabel Stevens

In the mid-1950s, West Germans frequenting Frankfurt and Kassel's cinemas in the afternoon might have stumbled across graphic designer and illustrator Hans Hillmann sitting alone in an empty theatre next to a Rollei on a tripod. Newly graduated in graphic design, Hillmann had started creating posters for the fledgling distributor Neue Filmkunst (New Film Art). This was his research.

Between 1953 and 1974 Hillmann, who died in May aged 88, designed 130 film posters. Most poster designers work from stills or publicity material; Hillmann meticulously studied the film, creating designs as radical as the cinema his posters advertised: a giant painted battle scene, comprising eight posters, for Kurosawa's *Seven Samurai*; a startling close-up of a hand reaching into a pocket for Bresson's *Pickpocket*. He enjoyed a long-running collaboration with Jean-Luc Godard, designing eight posters for his films' German releases. You can even spy Hillmann's posters in the background of Juliette Janson's flat in Godard's *2 or 3 Things I Know About Her*– among them a design for Alain Resnais's *Muriel*, a poster masquerading as a torn notebook, which Resnais commissioned directly from Hillmann. In 1969 Edgar Reitz (best known for *Heimat*), having seen Hillmann's designs for Godard's *Une Femme est une femme* and Carné's *Le Quai des brumes*, asked him to do a poster for his second feature *Cardillac*. He recalls: "I had brought a selection of stills and was amazed that Hillmann showed no interest in the images of the actor, but tried talking to me, the author and director, to fathom the deeper motives of the film."

"The entire film was there in this picture," Volker Schlöndorff says of Hillmann's design for his 1970 film *The Sudden Fortune of the Poor People of Kombach*, "but I was worried because I thought in its bleakness it might scare the audience away. His designs were uncompromising, radical and inspired, as were the movies in those days, alas gone by".

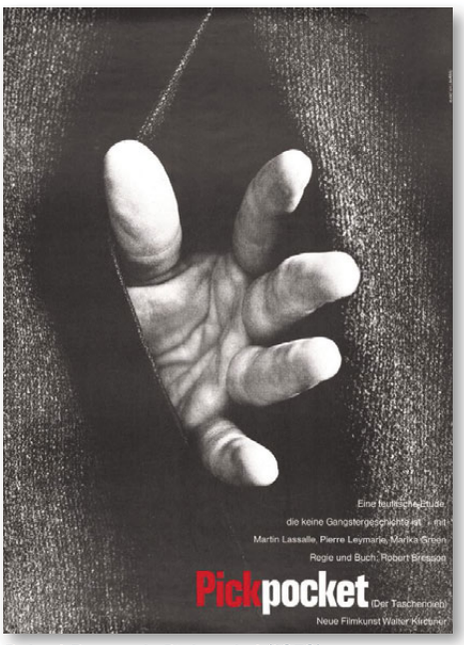
Hillmann described West Germany after World

ON OUR RADAR

Sci-fi: Days of Fear and Wonder
The BFI's nationwide sci-fi season (October–December) launches at the British Museum (28–30 August), with three British classics: Nic Roeg's 'The Man Who Fell to Earth' (right), Mike Hodges's 'Flash Gordon' and Val Guest's 'The Day the Earth Caught Fire'.

Cambridge Film Festival
Screenings of docudrama pioneer Lionel Rogosin's 'Come Back, Africa' (right) and 'On the Bowery' are just two highlights of this year's festival (28 August – 7 September), which also includes a strand dedicated to new German cinema.

Vsevolod Pudovkin's *Storm over Asia* (1928)



Robert Bresson's *Pickpocket* (1959)

War II, as "a cinematic desert". There were no art theatres; the nearest film museum was in Paris. Neue Filmkunst, set up by film club enthusiasts Walter Kirchner and Werner Schwier, tried to rectify that, introducing audiences to foreign films such as Mizoguchi's *Ugetsu Monogatari*, and rereleasing classics such as Pudovkin's *Storm over Asia*. After photographing fragments of films, Hillmann would have a few weeks to gestate his designs, creating a series of postcard-size versions ("to compete with myself") to show Kirchner. He had total freedom: "There were no prescriptions about motifs, unlike traditional film posters, where the distribution boss would say, 'I'd rather have it in red.'" Faces often figure imaginatively – obscured by an explosion of paint (Marco Bellocchio's *In the Name of the Father*), or composed of lots of tiny figures (René Allio's *Pierre and Paul*). Only rarely are they actors' faces.

At first he followed the custom of isolating a representative image from the film. Distributors' budgets limited him to monochrome letterpress designs, but he used such restrictions inventively. From the late 50s, screenprinting allowed him to use luminous colours and experiment with photography, creating more symbolic, layered posters. He never settled on one style. His designs often combined media, as in his chilling interpretation of Luis Buñuel's 1955 tale of a wannabe serial killer, *The Criminal Life of Archibaldo de la Cruz* – a photographed hand ripping through the poster to strangle a drawn neck of a victim: Hillmann called it "a murder on paper". Many designs are self-reflexive, making the subject the medium of the poster or film itself – numerous posters resemble strips of celluloid.

Berberian Sound Studio director Peter Strickland, a long-time admirer, describes Hillmann's aesthetic as "often stubbornly minimal, enigmatic yet very direct in conveying a strong mood." He continues: "Hillmann often incorporated found objects into his posters and lets them reveal, obscure, shatter or protrude through the surface. Leaves, glass and other detritus all combine to give an organically three-dimensional effect. These objects are not only there to provide texture, they're also clues to the film. It's as if Hillmann was let loose on the sets during the shoot and allowed to collect props or any material that was present. It's a very active form of design, which ignites the imagination. He makes me look at films I already know differently."

An exhibition of Hans Hillmann's film posters will be on show from 21 August – 27 September at Kemistry Gallery, London. A programme of related films runs at London's Goethe Institut and Ciné Lumière

LISTOMANIA

GREEK MYTH FILMS

As Dwayne Johnson's Hercules strides into battle (and UK cinemas) this month, we select ten classic adaptations from Greek legends.

1. **The Legend of King Midas (1910)** *Louis Feuillade*
2. **Orphée (1950)** *Jean Cocteau*
3. **Black Orpheus (1959)** *Marcel Camus*
4. **Le Mépris (1963)** *Jean-Luc Godard*
5. **My Fair Lady (1964)** *George Cukor*
6. **Oedipus the King (1968)** *Philip Saville*
7. **Medea (1969)** *Pier Paolo Pasolini*
8. **Clash of the Titans (1981)** *Desmond Davis*
9. **Mighty Aphrodite (1995)** *Woody Allen*
10. **O Brother, Where Art Thou? (2000)** *Joel and Ethan Coen*

QUOTE OF THE MONTH

SATYAJIT RAY

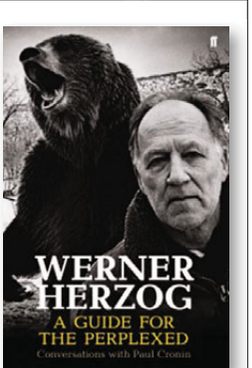
'The director is the only person who knows what the film is about'

Satyajit Ray's *Charulata* (1964) is rereleased in UK cinemas on 22 August

Fritz Lang's 'M'
To mark the 50th anniversary of Peter Lorre's death, Lang's thriller (right), featuring the actor's first major screen role, has been restored and is back on UK screens from 5 September. Meanwhile, a Lorre season runs at BFI Southbank, London from 2 September – 7 October.

Elio Petri
A season dedicated to one of the most unusual and overlooked Italian directors of the 60s and 70s runs at the ICA, London, from 5-11 September. It includes Petri's most acclaimed feature, the crime drama 'Investigation of a Citizen Above Suspicion' (1970), but also provides the rare opportunity to see, among others, his lesser-known sci-fi gem 'The 10th Victim' (1965) and the Mafia murder tale 'We Still Kill the Old Way' (1967) .

Werner Herzog
The German director is known for his outlandish feats and singular insights into the filmmaking process. An update of Paul Cronin's 2003 collection of interviews 'Herzog on Herzog' provides the opportunity to delve even deeper into his career.



UNDER THE SKIN

A medium that's all about the flesh has found some peculiar uses for what's underneath – make no bones about it

By Hannah McGill

Human skulls and skeletons are frequently cast as monsters. From childhood, the idea of the bones beneath our skin being exposed prompts a shudder that makes them a useful personification of all that we fear from death. But their aggressive manifestations – as the vengeful reanimated undead, or as an impactful brand icon for pirates and Hells Angels – is only one aspect of a symbolic function that has as much to do with frailty as ferociousness. Skeletons are only frightening because we are so close to being them, and because, stripped of what makes us recognisable and distinct, we appear so interchangeable. The *memento mori*, embraced in art, design and architecture with the rise of Christianity, cautions us not to attach too much importance to earthly trappings, including the flesh on our bones.

Within a medium that specifically celebrates those things ("flesh impact" was Billy Wilder's term for the particular screen presence of cinema's most potent female sex symbols), bones seem to carry a particular chill. Even when not as horrifying as the wizened remains of Mrs Bates in *Psycho* (1960), they have relentless, impersonal and near-indestructible kinetic force, as in *Jason and the Argonauts* (1963), or the threatening, corrupting taint of ancient wisdom – a specific threat to Western order in *Indiana Jones and the Kingdom of the Crystal Skull* (2008). Even animal bones will tend to suggest at best an unwholesome attachment to things past and dead, and at worst – as in *The Texas Chain Saw Massacre* (1974) – a propensity for sadistic killing and grisly trophy-keeping. In *2001: A Space Odyssey* (1968), the repurposing of a bone as a weapon is a thrilling evolutionary leap, but also a shift away from primal innocence and towards the development of technology that will ultimately facilitate mass destruction.

The dinosaur 'intercostal clavicle' featured in (and invented for) *Bringing Up Baby* (1938) triggers rather lighter forms of human conflict – although the threat of being killed and eaten does stalk several of the characters as a result of its misplacement. The fact that dithery palaeontologist David (Cary Grant) can't find his bone, and that the sexually decisive Susan (Katharine Hepburn) eventually gives it back to him, has an interpretation that's hard to miss – and that's before we even throw in the fact that Susan keeps as her familiar an unmanageable, sharp-toothed pussycat with a tendency to eat everything it sees. David's sexual identity comes into frequent question during the film (not least in the much-quoted scene in which he wears a negligée and declares himself to have gone "gay all of a sudden"). Hawks himself, in Joseph McBride's *Hawks on Hawks* (1982), credits Grant

A bone to pick: David (Cary Grant) and fiancée Alice (Virginia Walker) in *Bringing Up Baby*

Bony was a warrior: Todd Armstrong and Ray Harryhausen's skeleton crew in *Jason and the Argonauts*

BFI NATIONAL ARCHIVE (1)/KOBAL COLLECTION (4)/PHOTOFEST NYC (1)

with a particular facility for material in which his character cedes sexual dominance: "It's pretty hard to think of anybody but Cary Grant in that type of stuff... Cary is such a great receiver." But Hawks's claim is that the feminisation of Grant was straightforwardly belittling – "Anything we could do to humiliate him, to put him down and let her sail blithely along, made it what I thought was funny" – ignores the film's more subversive implication that David's emasculation is a positive progression for him. The male protagonist only achieves his personal aims – and hence the film its narrative aims – via his acceptance of female power: romantic and sexual union requires submission to Susan and the disorder that she brings; professional security comes thanks to Susan's aunt donating her money to the museum. Though David does get to complete the brontosaurus's skeleton, its collapse at the film's close indicates that his investment in the distant past, his finicky need for neat completion of things and his fussy guardianship of his 'bone' must all be left behind in favour of Susan's 'feminine' disorganisation and breezy modernity. The idea of a man being divested of a bone by a woman calls up more

2001: A Space Odyssey

Films are themselves made from the bones of dead things, since all photographic film contains gelatin

than just Freudian imagery: it also has resonances with the creation of Eve, specifically referenced in the title of a later Katharine Hepburn vehicle, *Adam's Rib* (1949). "It will tickle your funny bone!" promised one of that film's original taglines.

Time was when one could have pulled all of this together, as neatly as a palaeontologist completing a skeleton, with the observation that films are themselves made from the bones of dead things, since all photographic film contains gelatin. As Nicole Shukin dramatically puts it in her study *Animal Capital: Rendering Life in Biopolitical Times* (2009), "The rise of cinematic culture was... literally – materially – contingent on mass slaughter." The digital revolution renders this macabre detail somewhat retro, although the notion of cinema as a glorified by-product of the abattoir remains a perversely evocative one.

THE FIVE KEY...

JEWEL THIEF FILMS

Common thieves steal money – uncommon thieves, more often than not, prefer something a little more glamorous

By Michael Brooke

In the cinema's criminal hierarchy, jewel thieves are the natural aristocrats, running effortless rings around bank robbers or street muggers. Suave and sophisticated, combining natural athleticism with a thorough grasp of how to tame alarm systems, and often played by Cary Grant or David Niven: blatant criminality aside, what's not to admire? Indeed, on my first Cannes visit in 1993, I vividly recall being thrilled by news of a daring jewel robbery from a hotel safe, a shamefully amoral reaction that I blame squarely on the likes of Lubitsch and Hitchcock for making the process seem so sparklingly sexy.

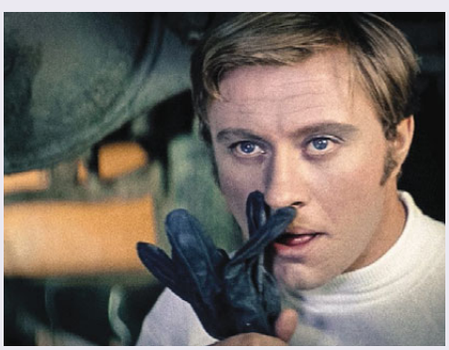
i ***To Catch a Thief* is rereleased in UK cinemas on 8 August**

1 Trouble in Paradise (1932)
Ernst Lubitsch's effervescent comedy about two thieves (Herbert Marshall and Miriam Hopkins) joining forces romantically and professionally wasn't made a moment too soon: Hollywood's Production Code would take a very dim view of its seeming glorification of crime and its near-the-knuckle innuendo, although it's precisely these elements that make the film seem so fresh and sprightly eight decades on.

2 To Catch a Thief (1955)
One of Hitchcock's most cheerfully upbeat films, set on the French Riviera, and featuring a neat twist on one of his perennial 'wrong man' scenarios – here, stripy-sweatered Cary Grant's retired jewel thief is naturally the prime suspect following a spate of robberies with a familiar-seeming *modus operandi*. But how can he convince Charles Vanel's cynical inspector of his innocence?

3 Rififi (1955)
Released the same year as *To Catch a Thief*, set in the same country but otherwise very different, Jules Dassin's thriller is one of the ultimate crime procedurals. Its daring nocturnal jewel heist is depicted in such riveting detail that the BBFC's John Trevelyan was nervous about passing it for British audiences, before realising that the required level of skill and equipment precluded casual imitation.

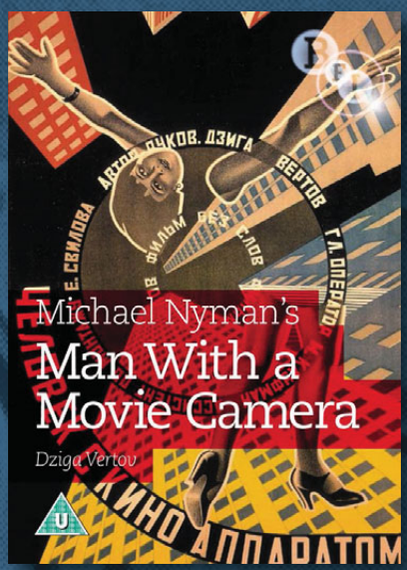
4 The Pink Panther (1963)
Originally conceived as a caper movie about a suave playboy thief (David Niven) in quest of the legendary pink diamond of the title, Blake Edwards's film was comprehensively upstaged by supporting actor Peter Sellers (debuting as the hapless Inspector Clouseau) and Richard Williams's iconic title animation – elements that were pushed much more to the fore in the film's numerous sequels.

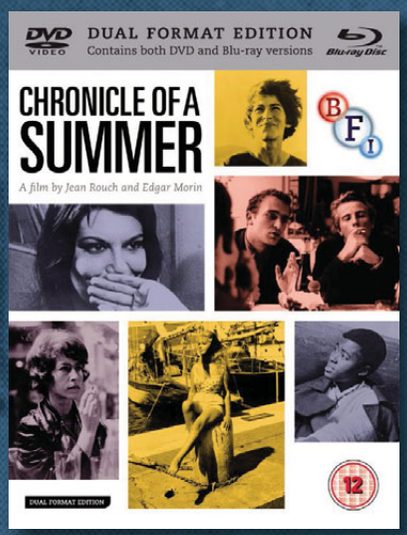


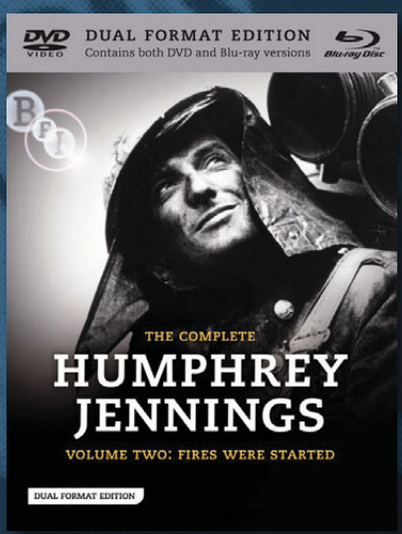
5 The Diamond Arm (1969)
An all-time Soviet domestic blockbuster, whose dialogue recurs in popular catchphrases to this day, Leonid Gaidai's Dayglo-coloured comedy is still pretty funny even for non-Russian speakers. The titular object is an allegedly broken arm whose plaster cast conceals illicit jewels – a smuggling method based on an actual incident, although the surrounding mistaken-identity farce was the film's invention.

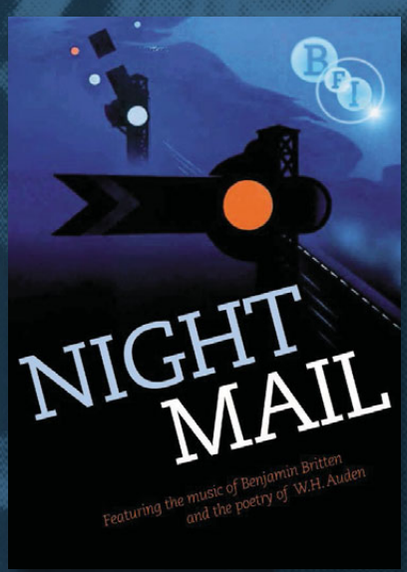
BFI Film Forever

THE WORLD'S GREATEST DOCUMENTARIES ARE ON BFI DVD & BLU-RAY









Franju's *Le Sang des bêtes* available soon on *Eyes Without a Face*

bfi.org.uk

Available to buy now from MOVIEMAIL.COM YOUR WORLD OF FILM & TV

0844 376 0009

GOMORRAH NEVER DIES

Roberto Saviano's book about the Neapolitan Camorra, already a hit on the big screen, is now Italy's answer to *Breaking Bad*

By Pasquale Iannone

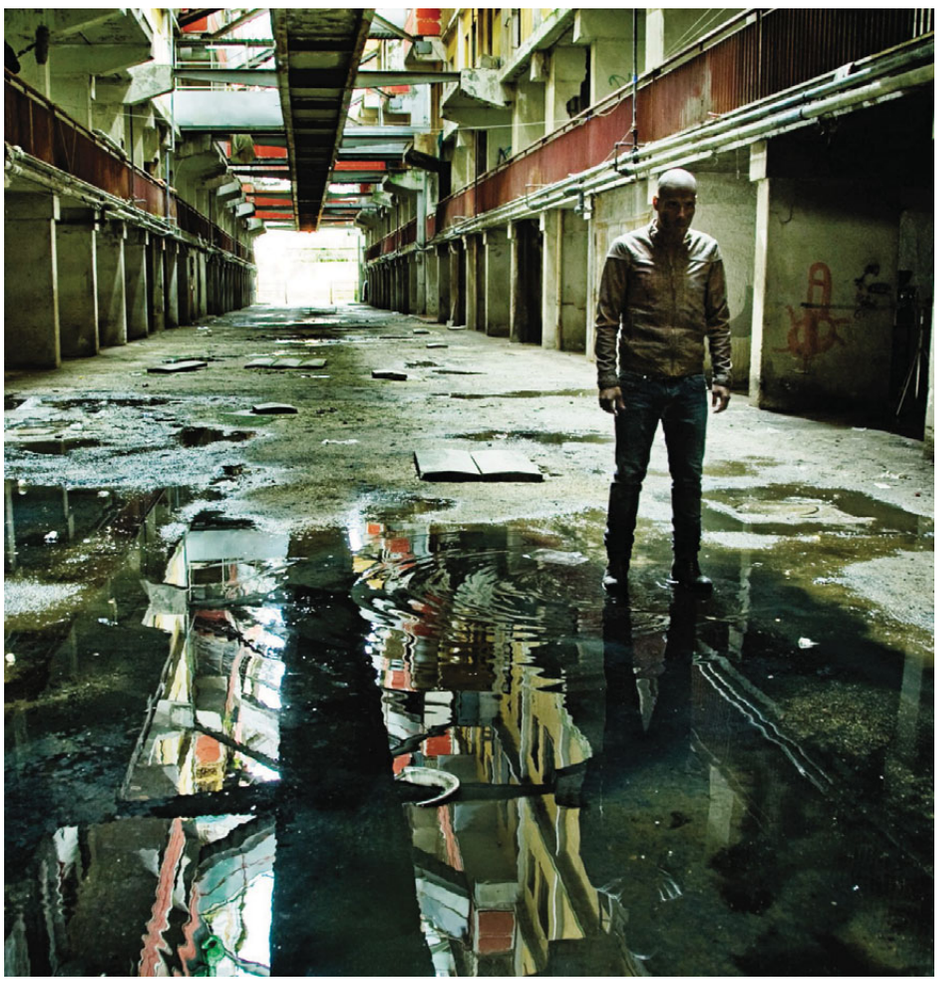
A chilling investigation into the workings of the Neapolitan mafia – the Camorra – Roberto Saviano's *Gomorrah* was an international sensation on publication in 2006. Saviano, then only 27, dared to lift the lid on a criminal organisation whose power and influence stretched far beyond his native Naples. The author paid for his courage with death threats and has been forced to live under police protection ever since. Despite this, he continues to be a vital presence in Italian cultural life, making regular appearances in print and on TV. He has also published a collection of essays, *Beauty and the Inferno* (2009), and another exposé, this time of the cocaine trade – 2013's *Zero Zero Zero*.

In 2008, Saviano and a group of five screenwriters (including director Matteo Garrone) adapted *Gomorrah* for the big screen, choosing to focus on five main stories from the book. But Saviano always felt that, constricted by a conventional theatrical running time, the film had barely scratched the surface. Only a series would be able to explore the subject in more depth. Taking inspiration from long-form US dramas such as *The Sopranos* and *Breaking Bad*, Saviano approached Stefano Sollima – the man behind another popular TV spin-off, *Romanzo Criminale* (2008-10) – to act as showrunner; the Rome-born filmmaker shares directing duties with Claudio Cupellini and Francesca Comencini.

The TV version of *Gomorrah* centres on the fortunes of the Savastano crime family. In the first two episodes, we're introduced to patriarch Don Pietro (Fortunato Cerlino), a powerful boss whose grey demeanour is less violent criminal and more steel-willed CEO (echoes of Gian Maria Volonté in Francesco Rosi's 1973 film *Lucky Luciano*). With the help of enforcer Ciro Di Marzio (Marco D'Amore), Pietro plots against a rival clan led by the young, devout Salvatore Conte (Marco Palvetti) while attempting to blood his son Gennaro, aka 'Genny' (Salvatore Esposito) into the family business. Although he enjoys the lifestyle of the boss's son, Genny doesn't seem to have the stomach to take over from his father. "When I was 20, I really had balls," an exasperated Pietro tells his wife Donna Imma (Maria Pia Calzone), "I was always with my father, I observed, I understood – who the hell does Genny take after?"

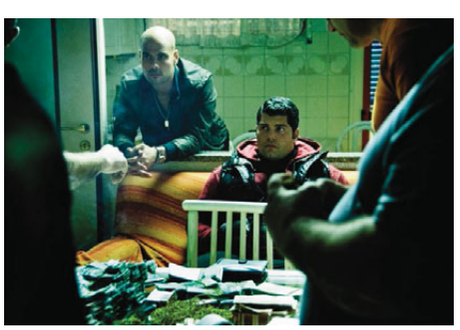
Early in the series, Pietro is arrested and jailed. The remaining episodes deal with the Savastano family's continuing feud with Conte as well as their involvement in politics, property and drug trafficking. Most compelling however, is the power struggle at the heart of the family. With Pietro behind bars, who has what it takes to be boss – Imma or her son Genny?

In his original book, Saviano dedicated a chapter to the role of women in Neapolitan organised crime: "The transformation of the Camorra in recent years has also meant a metamorphosis of the female's role, which has gone from that of a maternal figure and helper in times of misfortune to a serious manager who concerns herself almost exclusively with the business and financial end of things, delegating the fighting and illegal trafficking to others." This is essentially what happens to Imma. She wastes very little time in taking the reins of the family, much to the indignation of Ciro, who pushes for the more easily manipulated Genny to take control. Imma is well aware of these manoeuvres and separates the two, sending her son to Honduras to broker a major drug deal while dispatching Ciro to Spain to bargain with an exiled Conte. When Genny returns from Honduras, he has undergone a remarkable physical and mental transformation. Gone is the podgy, wavy-haired soft touch of the early episodes; the new Genny – leaner, meaner and sporting a Travis Bickle mohawk – is not going to let anyone stand in his way, not even his mother.



Edge of darkness: Marco D'Amore as Ciro di Marzio in the TV version of *Gomorrah*

Naples residents have criticised the show's makers, tired of what they see as film and television's unflattering depictions of life there



Marco D'Amore and Salvatore Esposito

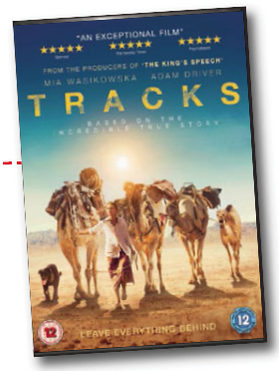
As in the 2008 film, one of the main locations for Saviano's series is the 'Sails of Scampìa', a large housing complex located to the north of Naples. Many residents of Scampìa and the surrounding area have criticised the show's makers, growing tired of what they see as film and television's continued unflattering depictions of life there, and in Naples more widely. In an interview with Francesco de Core for Neapolitan daily *Il Mattino* in May, Saviano argued that just as *Breaking Bad* never suggests that everyone in Albuquerque is involved with drugs, his series in no way claims that everyone from Scampìa has links with the Camorra. "*Gomorrah* tells of the lives, the contradictions, the emotions and the ferocity of an area that is also so much more," he says "but we focus on one significant element, one that the news has touched upon but quickly forgotten about."

***Gomorrah* runs on Sky Atlantic from 7 August**

fresh produce

FOPP

tracks
also available on blu-ray
released 18/08/14 **£10**



starred up
also available on blu-ray
released 04/08/14 **£10**

blue ruin
also available on blu-ray
released 01/09/14 **£10**

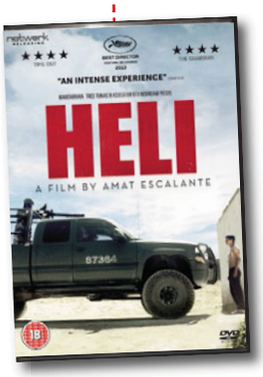
extraterrestrial
released 01/09/14 **£8**

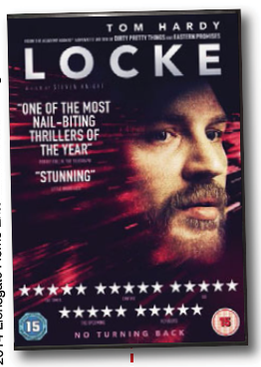
Artwork © 2014 Icon Film Distribution. All Rights Reserved.

next goal wins
released 01/09/14 **£8**

Artwork © 2014 Icon Film Distribution. All Rights Reserved.

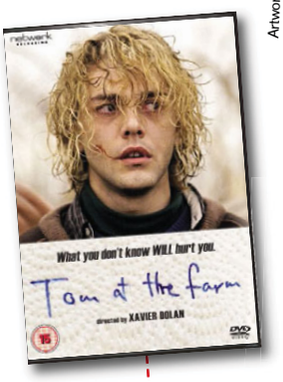
heli
subtitled/spanish
also available on blu-ray
released 25/08/14 **£10**





© 2014 Lionsgate Home Entertainment UK. All Rights Reserved

locke
also available on blu-ray
released 25/08/14 **£10**



tom at the farm
also available on blu-ray
released 18/08/14 **£10**

the toxic avenger
also available on dvd
released 18/08/14 **£8**

futureworld
also available on dvd
released 18/08/14 **£7**

© 1976 Orion Pictures Corporation All Rights Reserved.

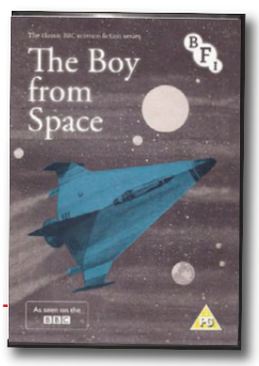
the changes
2 discs
released 18/08/14 **£18**

detropia
released 25/08/14 **£10**

master of the world
released 18/08/14 **£8**

© 1961 Orion Pictures Corporation. All Rights Reserved.

the boy from space
2 discs
released 18/08/14 **£18**



suck it and see

buy your cds, dvds and books from fopp – if they suck we'll give you a swap or your lolly

This offer applies to all cds, dvds and books instore and is only available on production of a valid receipt dated no more than four weeks from the time of your original purchase. Goods must be in the condition as sold, both the sleeve/case, disc or spine/pages. We reserve the right to refuse this offer. This offer in no way affects your statutory rights. Titles subject to availability, while stocks last. Individual titles which appear elsewhere in the store, outside of this campaign, may be priced differently.

FoppOfficial | #gettofopp | fopp.com

fopp stores

bristol college green // **cambridge** sidney st // **edinburgh** rose st // **glasgow** union st & byres rd // **london** covent garden // **manchester** brown st // **nottingham** queen st

RELOADING THE CANON

Our idea of what counts as great nonfiction cinema is embarrassingly parochial. Maybe that is starting to change

By Mark Cousins

It's great to see *The Emperor's Naked Army Marches On* and *The House Is Black* in *Sight & Sound*'s poll of the greatest documentary films ever made. Hara Kazuo's Japanese film about a righteous, vengeful former soldier and Forough Farokhzad's portrait of an Iranian leper colony, though made in 1987 and 1962 respectively, are being seen more and discussed more. They're on their way up. Twenty years ago they were far less well-known.

Their appearance raises questions about how many other great nonfiction films there are that we in the West don't know. For generations now, our documentary canon – the films we see, show, discuss and are influenced by – has been essentially Atlanticist. Once the fervour of Soviet innovation in documentary in the 20s abated, Britain, France, East Coast America and Canada in the 50s and 60s seemed to make the running. Free Cinema, *Night and Fog*, then *cinéma vérité* and Direct Cinema, Marcel Ophüls, the Maysles' *Salesman*, Leacock, *Grey Gardens*, Jean Rouch, Agnès Varda, Chris Marker, Lanzmann, etc. They outdid and freed each other. We were dazzled. The Atlantic canon became a consensus. It had great characters or stories, or showed us how institutions work. The films were Aristotelian – unified in time and space. They benefited from the upside of the colonial imagination – a centrifugal desire to engage with elsewhere. It helped that they were in Latinate languages – mostly English or French.

Compare this with what was happening with the fiction film canon in the West from the 1950s onwards, and a problem becomes clear. Thanks to go-betweens like the Venice Film Festival in the 50s, Pierre Rissient, American Japanophile Donald Richie and, later, people like critic Tony Rayns, we in the West belatedly saw the great Asian films of Ozu, Kurosawa, the Chinese directors of the 80s etc, and absorbed them into our sense of what cinema is. In contrast, documentary had fewer such bridge-builders between East and West. American filmmaker and film historian Jay Leyda went to the USSR and sang the praises of Esfir Shub et al (and the Soviet bloc had a missionary zeal, an export mentality), but there were not many like Leyda. There's less money in the world of documentary so, if you were in Tokyo or Beijing, Seoul or Manila from the 1940s onwards, it was harder to invite Western guests to discover your non-fiction cinema. And the languages are trickier.

Eventually, thank goodness, things improved. The wonderful Yamagata International Documentary Film Festival in Japan helped establish a Pacific canon – films from Japan, the Philippines, Korea, China. As a result, the documentaries of Ogawa Shinsuke, Tsuchimoto Noriaki and Hara Kazuo started to be shown in the West. American scholars like Abé Mark Nornes contextualised these Japanese films and we began to see that their patience or quietude or scale or disruptive energy were at least the equal of 'our' classics. We thought we invented the environmental film, but didn't. The Pacific canon centred on groups more than individuals. The talking head appeared somewhat less. The pacing was slower. There was more of a balance between action and stasis than in much Western documentary.

The Pacific canon has still a way to go in the West, but it's getting there. And, of course, we need to subject our Western love of documentary to other incursions. The writing of Iranian-American scholar Hamid Naficy, for example, opens the way to what could be called the 'exilic' canon in documentary – films made by people who travel not because they have power (like Jean Rouch in Africa, for example), but because they haven't. And Arabists need to speak more – and be heard more – about the landmarks of Egyptian, Moroccan, Syrian, Iraqi and Jordanian nonfiction cinema. If you haven't seen the films of Omar Amiralay, for example, get googling. India is the major country whose fiction cinema is least understood by Western movie buffs, many of whom think that its cinema is a choice between Bollywood and Satyajit Ray (and they often haven't even seen the classics of the former, such as *Sholay*). Alas, the same is true of Indian nonfiction cinema, which is also poorly known. Thankfully, Anand Patwardhan, one of the world's great activist documentary filmmakers, is now getting more recognition in the West – though I've met many senior festival programmers who still haven't heard of him – and Kashmiri director and teacher Mani Kaul's docs are far less well-known. Every time I say this, someone pipes up with, "But how do we see these films – the prints are in such bad shape?" True, but it's chicken and egg. If the films were more valued and in more demand, they would be better preserved. If we were more curious... if we considered these films 'ours' – cinema being borderless. So many ifs. You get my point: the documentary canon is even more wrong than the fiction film canon.

'But how do we see these films – the prints are in such bad shape?' But if the films were more valued, they would be better preserved

Sight & Sound asked me to make a short film about this, a taster of which can be viewed at bfi.org.uk/sightandsound. When we began cutting it, I realised we were going to need a bigger boat, so I am now hoping to turn it into a perhaps three-hour postscript to my 15-hour *The Story of Film: An Odyssey*. This postscript will not be a straight history of documentary film, taking us through the Atlantic canon. I love those films, but have decided to leap-frog that canon to get to the rarer treasures. In order to show that my film isn't a history of documentary, I'm calling it *Dear John Grierson*, and am imagining that I'm travelling the world on a train with Grierson, one of the founding fathers of the idea of documentary, to see the great films that we don't, and should, know. The result, I hope, will be a micro-budget *Snowpiercer*, in which, as we look out the window, we see masterpieces by people with names like Pelechian, Honkasalo, Tsuchimoto, Kaul, Kötting, Leduc, Perlov, Lozinski... Names that are not household, but perhaps could be, if we loved movies more.

ILLUSTRATION BY ARTHUR CHIVERTON

DEVELOPMENT TALE

HECTOR AND THE SEARCH FOR HAPPINESS

Inquisitive old Hector: Simon Pegg travels the world to find what makes people happy

How a Berlin-based producer, a Swedish writer and a British director took a globe-trotting French bestseller to London

By Charles Gant

François Lelord had been practising medicine and psychology for the better part of two decades when his debut novel, *Le Voyage d'Hector ou la Recherche du bonheur*, was published in his native France in 2002. The story, about a psychiatrist who goes off on a global search to discover what makes people happy, jumped off from Lelord's earlier published work, nonfiction self-help books such as *La Gestion du stress* [*Stress Management*]. The novel did well in France, but even better in Germany, where it soon caught the attention of the film industry, including Wiltshire-born, Berlin-based producer Judy Tossell.

"It was nine years ago," she explains. "*Hector and the Search for Happiness* had just been published here. My business partner at the time gave it to me and said, 'I think this could be a fantastic film.' I thought, complicated, but also cinematic, and what a great character." Despite interest from rival parties, Tossell was able to secure the film rights, and took the project to Warner Bros Germany for development financing.

"We soon realised it was a lot harder to make a script out of it and make decisions about what kind of film it was going to be," Tossell says. "The novel has a very particular tone of voice. It's a little bit *Little Prince*-ish, but dealing with very adult issues. We went through a couple of screenwriters, and the author even had a bash at it himself. At that point we realised we would need to bring a director on board. We needed the filmmaker's vision in terms of how much comedy, how serious, how are you going to adapt the voiceover. The novel is extremely episodic, more than the film could possibly get away with being, and we needed a much stronger backbone."

At this point, the Swedish writer-director Maria von Heland took over writing duties; she had previously worked on several Tossell productions, including *Big Girls Don't Cry* (2002) and *Hilde* (2009). Tossell says, "She had the right sense of humour, coupled with a very good handle on characters and emotions, and with her we made a very basic decision to make the relationship between Hector and his girlfriend much more central to the story than it is in the novel."

Director Katja von Garnier (*Bandits*, 1997) came on board, and continued developing the script with von Heland. However, says Tossell, "We just got to the point between us, where we thought, 'OK we just haven't quite cracked it.' We decided to start from scratch again." With new investment in her company, Tossell gained control of the rights from Warner Bros, which quit the project.

The producer's thoughts turned to British-born, Los Angeles-resident Peter Chelsom. "He had been on my list of directors for many films for many years. He always has that cheeky British sense of humour, but isn't afraid to go for the jugular emotionally, and get that balance between emotional, sentimental and very funny."

Throughout the development, despite its German financing and Paris setting, the film had been envisaged as English language. Tossell explains: "This is a film that requires a certain budget because you are sending your character – whether he's German, British or French – halfway around the world. And the people who he meets, the common language is going to be English. It would feel weird if he happened upon people who could speak German."

Chelsom, who has screenwriting credits on his two British features (*Hear My Song*, *Funny*

Bones) but not on the five US films that followed (*The Mighty, Town & Country, Serendipity, Shall We Dance* and *Hannah Montana: The Movie*), then made another important decision. Working with co-writer Tinker Lindsay, the filmmaker began to wonder if the original Paris setting was more hindrance than help. "There was a lot of apology going on," he says. "You have an English-speaking character. Did you have scenes in which he had French patients? Why wouldn't he? Or did he specialise in British patients in Paris? It became a little contrived. I thought, let's root it in London. It was also part of making it personal. I'm very Hector. People who know me see the film: 'Oh my God, that's you.' It's not a bad thing. Sometimes that's what we do to make our work the most personal."

As Tossell and Canadian producer partners Christine Haebler and Trish Dolman sought financing for the film, Chelsom created a three-minute short, using his friend Mike Romo, who he'd previously cast in commercials, as his Hector, plus archive clips and animation. "I did it as a teaser and a sales tool, but more to find my way into the movie. If you looked at it now, you'd go, 'Oh, it's a trailer for the film.' The look of it, the feel of it, it absolutely feels like the big film."

In the book and screenplay, Hector travels to far-flung destinations including China, Africa, California and Tibet, necessitating production spend at a certain level, and thus a cast of overall sufficient weight. The planets aligned after the film's US casting directors happened to be at a dinner with Simon Pegg. Says Chelsom, "*Hector*'s an odd one. We did go to a couple of actors who

This is a film that requires a certain budget because you are sending your character halfway around the world

didn't get it. Thank God they passed, because Simon so got it. It's Chauncey Gardiner meets Monsieur Hulot meets Forrest Gump. It involves a Tintin-esque childlike curiosity, which Simon has in spades. I can't see it working with anyone else." With Pegg on board, the cast rounded out with Rosamund Pike, Toni Collette, Stellan Skarsgård, Jean Reno and Christopher Plummer.

Says Chelsom, "The first dinner I had with Simon, I said: 'There is a version of *Hector* that you and I could make like falling off a log, and we have to avoid that version of this movie.' We know how to get laughs, we can do all that stuff, but we have to go deep, and we have to be real.

"When everyone came on to *Hector*, almost without exception, they all came to rehearsal or audition slightly in the wrong comedy mode, where it's being signalled a bit. I found myself saying time and time again, 'No guys, please understand that the situations are bizarre enough without you doing anything bizarre.' If you do that, then you do earn the darker moments. When you tell good actors they don't have to try so hard to be funny, it's a relief to them."

***Hector and the Search for Happiness* is released on August 15 and will be reviewed in our next issue**

THE NUMBERS
BOYHOOD

By Charles Gant

When Universal acquired international (non-US) rights to Richard Linklater's *Boyhood*, the UK team could hardly look for great comfort from the director's previous box-office track record in this country. Among his 14 previous theatrically released features, only one, *School of Rock*, had made it past the £1 million barrier, and many fell well short. As recently as April 2013, *Bernie*, starring Jack Black, managed just £96,000. On the other hand, critical response to *Boyhood* coming out of Sundance and Berlin could hardly have been more adulatory.

"Our strategy was that this is a film that people need to see for themselves," says Universal UK's Dutch-born managing director Niels Swinkels. "It is an intriguing, unique concept." The approach extended to the trailers, which in one version features the director and actors Ethan Hawke and Patricia Arquette speaking directly to camera about the making of the film – a movie-marketing tactic little glimpsed since the days of Alfred Hitchcock. Swinkels calls the unusual promo piece "a risk worth taking".

Swinkels insists his team wasn't fazed by the filmmaker's patchy commercial record, focusing instead on the potential of the acquired title. And Universal long ago settled on a July UK release date, as counter-programming to summer blockbuster fare. "It worked before with our films *Senna* and *Moonrise Kingdom*," he explains. "Also, the film has a very uplifting summer feel to it."

With negligible competition up against *Boyhood* in the arthouse space, the exhibition sector proved wildly enthusiastic. Unusually, the title featured in near-identical covers for the rival Curzon and Picturehouse magazines.

If *Boyhood*'s long running time (166 minutes) is a potential challenge for audiences, it's definitely one for exhibition, since it's not possible to programme two evening showtimes of it in a single screen. The Curzon Soho, which at press time was *Boyhood*'s top-grossing cinema, responded by straddling it across two screens, filling in the gaps with other, shorter titles.

Richard Linklater and Patricia Arquette on set

Boyhood opened on a healthy £312,000 from 89 sites, plus £20,000 in previews: manna to indie cinemas that had been crying out for a decent hit since March's *The Grand Budapest Hotel*. An expansion to 159 cinemas in week two helped buoy it to a second weekend of another £312,000 and a ten-day cumulative total of £898,000. So far, all the signs point to a significant multiple of the opening number.

While awards season doesn't officially get under way until the key autumn film festivals (Venice, Toronto, Telluride), and Universal has yet to launch any campaign, early prognosticators have already thrown *Boyhood* into the race, suggesting it as a film against which future contenders will be measured. No film premiering at Sundance has ever gone on to win the Best Picture Oscar, but it's hard to argue with Swinkels that, "You can only imagine that when awards season opens properly, this is a film that won't be easily forgotten."

RICHARD LINKLATER AT THE UK BOX OFFICE

Film	Year	Gross
The School of Rock	2004	£10,498,228
A Scanner Darkly	2006	£995,867
Before Sunset	2004	£932,259
Boyhood	2014	£897,838*
Before Midnight	2013	£844,423
Me and Orson Welles	2009	£497,878
Before Sunrise	1995	£463,477
Dazed and Confused	1994	£295,000
Tape	2002	£109,367
Bad News Bears	2005	£106,274

***Gross after 10 days**

Artificial Eye

artificial-eye.com

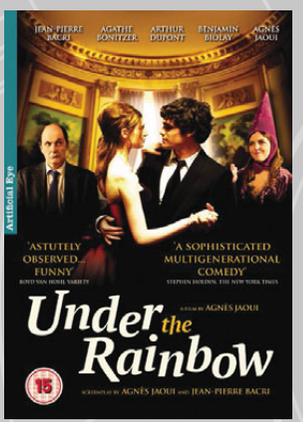
New Releases

Roman Polanski

Venus in Fur

Based on the Tony® award-winning play by David Ives and starring French screen icons Emmanuelle Seigner and Mathieu Amalric, Venus in Fur is a witty, intelligent and multi-layered examination of passion, perversion and the battle of the sexes from acclaimed director Roman Polanski.

AVAILABLE NOW ON DVD & BLU-RAY

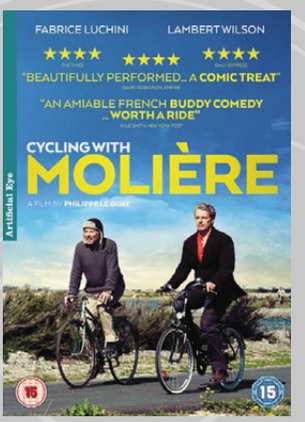


Agnès Jaoui

Under the Rainbow

A witty, charming and effervescent comedy of manners and errors from the director of Let's Talk About the Rain, this modern take on the romantic fable is a smart, snappy and ultimately affecting drama that beautifully melds the cynical with the wistful.

AVAILABLE ON DVD 11 AUGUST



Philippe Le Guay

Cycling with Molière

Lambert Wilson & Fabrice Luchini play fellow actors who reunite for a new production of Molière's 'The Misanthrope'. But as the rehearsals begin, the tempers begin to flare. Warm, witty, with intelligence in spades, this is a smart, likeable French comedy about two arrogant yet affable middle-aged men.

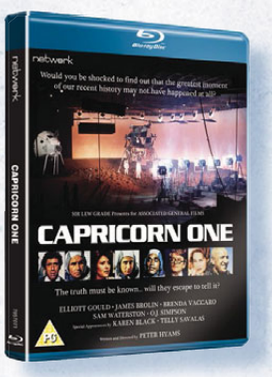
AVAILABLE ON DVD 25 AUGUST

Order now at amazon.co.uk

Free Super-saver Delivery and Unlimited Free One-day Delivery with Amazon Prime are available. Terms and conditions apply. See www.amazon.co.uk for details.

COMING TO BLU-RAY THIS AUGUST

THE BRITISH FILM



Capricorn One

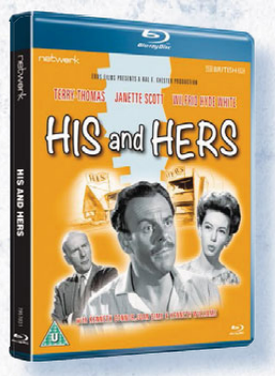
Classic sci-fi conspiracy thriller starring Elliot Gould and James Brolin.

Black Narcissus

A luminous Deborah Kerr stars in this Powell and Pressburger drama.

Plenty

Meryl Streep leads a stellar cast in David Hare's adaptation of his own play.



His and Hers

Terry-Thomas and Janette Scott star in this rare 60s farce.

VISIT NETWORKONAIR.COM TO EXPLORE THE BRITISH FILM COLLECTION.

network

networkdistributing networktweets #TheBritishFilm

amazon.co.uk

Free Super Saver Delivery and Unlimited One-Day Delivery with Amazon Prime are available on eligible orders. Terms and Conditions apply. See Amazon.co.uk for details.

PLAYING TO THE AUDIENCE

BFI FILM FUND INSIGHTS

Making films is one thing – getting the films to audiences outside London and the arthouse circuit is another

By Ben Roberts

Last night I saw *Boyhood* at my local cinema. A year ago this would have meant a one-minute walk to the Barbican, or a 15-minute walk to one of two cinemas in Islington or one of however many cinemas showing the film in the West End. Now that I'm an out-of-towner it involves a 30-minute drive to the Cineworld in Ashford, the only multi-screen cinema I can reach in less than an hour. A film on limited release, such as *Boyhood*, often may not reach us until after the first week, if at all.

I'll confess that when I saw that the film wasn't playing Ashford on the opening weekend, I emailed friends at Universal, the UK distributor, and begged them to book it in. If that sounds like an indulgence, I can report that the screen was full – not bad for a near three-hour film on a Monday night. But that's not surprising: the film is the critical hit of the summer at a time when screens are jammed with *Transformers 4* and the like. Audiences for serious-minded cinema, or just good, interesting, different cinema, stretch far beyond the M25, to areas historically quite poorly served.

Much ink has been spilt over cinema provision in the UK. Audience choice was a major focus of the Film Policy Review and it's probably the most significant thread in the BFI's Film Forever plan. In recent years, funding for independent cinemas has been scarce (limited largely to some Arts Council support, grant-in-aid funding from us for a handful of venues, and some Europa Cinemas money), and financial encouragement for independent distributors to take risks on wider releases is limited to some EU MEDIA programme money and Lottery P&A (prints and advertising funding distributed by us). Since the independent exhibitors have long considered themselves the black sheep of the sector, it's no wonder that many of them grab at more mainstream programming when the opportunities arise.

A couple of years ago, in response to the growing concern that audience development was really starting to suffer, the BFI, wearing its new hat as a Lottery distributor, devised certain interventions. The most ambitious of these is the BFI Film Audience Network, a UK-wide network of cinema clusters – including leading arts venues, rural and community venues and commercial cinemas – which extend outwards from Lottery-funded lead 'hub' organisations to create a strength-in-numbers approach to programming and marketing. The network (known as FAN) has more than 300 member organisations and will keep growing. FAN members (and others) can also apply to a Lottery pot called the Programming Development Fund, the cinemas' equivalent of the distributors' P&A fund, intended to support inventive specialised film programming. Other Lottery support includes the Film Festivals Fund and the emerging BFI Neighbourhood, which supports touring cinema and provides kit for community venues.

Audiences for serious-minded cinema, or just good, interesting cinema, stretch far beyond the M25, but are poorly served

Ellar Coltrane in *Boyhood*

I mention all of these because behind the scenes we have been working hard to bring all of this activity into the Film Fund, where it will sit alongside our talent development, script development, feature production and distribution support operations. A slightly reconfigured team will look after UK-wide audience development, managing all the available funds for exhibition, festivals and distribution and making sure they are used to greatest effect. This is probably going to mean a slight rethinking of the Distribution Fund to ensure it's as user-friendly as it can be.

The audience team will then work much more closely with colleagues in development and production, making sure that filmmakers benefit from our access to distribution and exhibition brains. It's a great opportunity to fulfil the promise of keeping in mind the development of audiences for British and specialised film, from the seed of an idea to the film's opening weekend.

One of the areas I'm particularly keen to look at collectively is the sheer volume of material being pushed out on a weekly basis, and what effect this is having on audiences and individual films. Ask most critics, exhibitors and distributors about capacity and they will tell you that we've reached some kind of saturation point.

The amount of money currently available for audience development is unprecedented, and the key to the success of these funds is in making sure they aren't used to pander to existing appetites, but to reach that untapped yearning for something different and remarkable. Perhaps we should be putting more resources behind fewer films?

For me, Linklater performed some kind of magic with *Boyhood*, and it was wonderful to watch it in a full cinema. It's a great example of how brilliant and original filmmaking can become an event that resonates way beyond the confines of the arthouse. **@bfiben**

IN PRODUCTION

● **Edgar Wright** hasn't sat licking his wounds since deciding to walk away from Marvel's upcoming *Ant-Man* feature. The *Shaun of the Dead* director will instead turn his attention to *Baby Driver*, a project he apparently first began developing in 2008. Working Title's Tim Bevan and Eric Fellner are producing with Nira Park, and the project has been reported as a "collision of crime, action, music and sound".

● **John Wrathall**, British screenwriter of *The Liability* and *Good*, and longtime contributor to *Sight & Sound* as both a writer and sub-editor, is to see his script for *The Italian Chapel* go into production in 2015. The film – based on true events – is set during World War II and follows an Italian soldier who is captured by the British and sent to an island off the coast of Scotland, where he meets a local girl, with whom he works to turn a rusty hut into a beautiful chapel. Many years later, the former POW, now happily married, returns to the island, only to find the woman still living nearby.

● **Philippe Garrel**, the veteran French director whose film *Jealousy* opened in Britain in June, has started shooting his 25th feature film, *L'Ombre des femmes*. The film is co-written by Jean-Claude Carrière, Caroline Deruas and Arlette Langmann, and reportedly revolves around two impoverished documentary filmmakers in modern-day Paris.

● **Olivier Assayas** is set to shoot his first American film, in October. *Idol's Eye* will star Robert Pattinson, Rachel Weisz and Robert De Niro, and according to Assayas it is a true crime story set in Chicago in the 1970s, based on Hillel Levin's *Playboy* piece 'Boosting the Big Tuna'.

● **Pier Paolo Pasolini** is the subject of not one, but two upcoming features. First out of the gate will be Abel Ferrara's *Pasolini*, starring Willem Dafoe, due to premiere later this year. Following that will be *La macchinazione*, directed by Pasolini's former assistant Davide Grieco, which details the last three months of Pasolini's life before his murder in November 1975. The film is currently shooting in Italy.

● **Alejandro González Iñárritu** (below) is developing a TV series for the MRC channel titled *One Percent*, reportedly set in the world of organic farming. Hilary Swank, Ed Helms and Ed Harris are in talks to star. The series will follow Iñárritu's next feature, *Birdman or the Unexpected Virtue of Ignorance*, which premieres as the opening night film of this year's Venice festival.

IL CINEMA RITROVATO

TIME REGAINED

Marrying into money: Mae Murray and John Gilbert in Erich von Stroheim's 1925 version of *The Merry Widow*

BFI NATIONAL ARCHIVE (1)

Bologna's annual festival of the cinema of the past was a feast of gorgeous restorations and the paradoxically novel

By James Bell

Film festivals typically privilege the new, with their clamour for premieres and the latest discoveries, and the surrounding media rush to be first to register opinion on the previously unseen. But Bologna's Il Cinema Ritrovato (Cinema Rediscovered) festival, now in its 28th edition, is instead a vital celebration of the old, in all its inexhaustible variety – a festival entirely devoted to the joys of looking back. Its eight-day programme feels as varied as any major festival: reviving long-cherished old movies through new restorations, recontextualising the obscure or culturally remote through expertly programmed thematic collections, and rediscovering films that were previously lost, until their unearthing in one of the world's film archives. Here the 'old' cinema is privileged in all its abundance, with 'new' discoveries at every turn. Scanning the festival programme each morning, I was more than once reminded of Bob Dylan's response when asked why he played so much 'old' music on his *Theme Time Radio Hour* show: "Because there's a lot more old songs than new songs".

The audience is largely free (some would say mercifully) of journalists and hype-merchants, being made up instead of archivists, programmers, DVD and Blu-ray label heads, film scholars and historians, and technicians visiting to compare notes on new restorations and the techniques involved. Cannes indicates the films we might expect to see in cinemas over the year ahead; Il Cinema Ritrovato's selections hint at the films we might expect to see in rep theatres or in new DVD or Blu-ray editions. It may not provide the same glamour, but for those it serves this is a festival every bit as important as Cannes.

There's an argument that with so much of cinema history available on accessible, high-quality formats like Blu-ray, distinctions between the old and new are being eroded – that the landscape for today's cinephile is one in which the chronology suggested by weekly cinema programming cycles is of ever-decreasing importance, given that there is an almost infinite selection of films on offer instantaneously.

A visit to Il Cinema Ritrovato confirms that line but also corrects it, serving as a reminder of just how much remains unavailable on new media formats and of the importance of context. It's one thing to watch a selection of films from 1914 on DVD alone at home, and quite another to watch them as originally intended, with an audience and live accompaniment. That might be stating the obvious, but the focus provided by Il Cinema Ritrovato feels like an important affirmation of that truth.

The sheer range of films on offer this year was daunting, and inevitably decisions had to be made about which routes to take and which to pass up. The programme strands are grouped into four main sections. The first, 'The Time Machine', programmed (as it has been for a number of years) a selection of films made exactly 100 years earlier. It also included an intriguing programme of films made inside the Ottoman empire between 1896-1914 (I caught one of the three compilations, a mix of nonfiction travelogues, constructed narratives of the exotic orient, and dance performances, which, as the programmers pointed out, highlight the challenges of such early material – determining its provenance and whether it was staged for the camera or not). As well, there was a fascinating 'Musical Silents' programme co-curated by the BFI's Bryony Dixon, featuring silent films all linked in some way to music, either through early sound techniques, or expressly designed to be accompanied by particular pieces of music, whether classical or rousing singalongs (like the 1912 British film *Are We Downhearted?*). Perhaps the most memorable of those I caught was one by French pioneer of surrealism Germaine Dulac (the subject of a more extensive retrospective elsewhere in this year's programme), with the Paris-set, quite haunting and modern *Celles qui s'en font*, in which the lead

actress mouths the words to 'A la dérive', a song by Germaine Lix (the French singer and actress now perhaps best known for her role in Marcel Carné's *Le Jour se lève* (1939) – coincidentally, one of the new restorations that played on the big screen in Bologna's Piazza Maggiore in the festival's nightly open-air screenings).

The final programme in the 'Time Machine' strand gathered together a range of cinematic depictions of Adolf Hitler, from the astonishingly clear-sighted *Hitler's Reign of Terror*, shot by Cornelius Vanderbilt Jr on a trip to Europe in 1933, and a mixture of newsreel footage and re-enactments, to G.W. Pabst's 1955 film *The Last Act*, set in Hitler's Berlin bunker in the final days of the war. I regretted missing the compilation of Soviet anti-Hitler cartoons, and John Farrow's fascinating-sounding US production *The Hitler Gang*, which I was reliably informed was a mix of sharpness (depicting the Nazis as close to gangsterism) and absurd comedy, all the more remarkable for having been made in 1944.

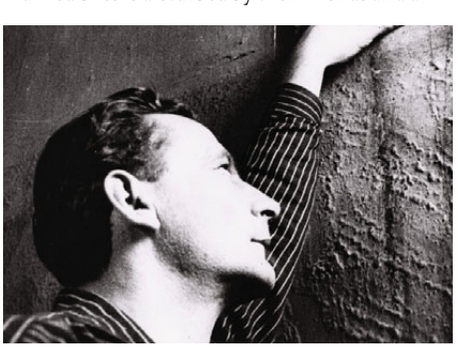
German cinema of the Nazi era (though most definitely not 'Nazi cinema') was represented elsewhere in the programme with a retrospective of director Werner Hochbaum, a figure who has been 'rediscovered' a number of times (David Robinson wrote about him in *S&S* in the 1970s) yet, perhaps owing to the lack of a DVD collection, remains in the margins. The films shown in Bologna were unsubtitled, with non-German speakers reliant instead on far-from-ideal simultaneous translation via headsets, so I avoided most; but that may have been a mistake, judging by the one I did catch, the silent *Brüder* (1929), a drama set around the Hamburg docks during the historic strike of 1896-97. The film was commissioned by the Social Democratic party, and uses non-professional actors and location shooting to very blunt, striking effect. The aesthetic is a stark one, but for the most part (certainly until the plot of the strike itself kicks in) quite singular, with little camera movement but a sharp eye for detail. The strike depicted may have been historic, but in the tough, politicised faces of those seen on camera, and the impoverished dwellings and working conditions at the icy Hamburg docks in midwinter, it was impossible not to view it as a document of the conditions around 1930 from which the competing ideologies of the day in Germany – Nazi, Communist or Social Democrat – drew support and focus.

Also from the 1930s was a terrific programme of early Japanese sound films from the Shochiku studio (co-programmed by regular *S&S* contributor Alexander Jacoby), the third in as many years, following earlier programmes looking at the Nikkatsu and PCL studios. Sound cinema came slowly to Japan, in part because of the strength of the *benshi* tradition of live narration of silent cinema – so much so that Ozu Yasujiro, for instance, only made his first talkie in 1936. That film – the heartbreaking *The Only Son*, regarded by many as one of Ozu's greatest films – was included, alongside a number of other titles previously unscreened in the West, revealing the very partial view we have of Japanese cinema of the period. One of these was Shimizu Hiroshi's *The Lady Who Wept in Spring* (1933), which, for

Bleak moments: *The Lady Who Wept in Spring* (1933), directed by Shimizu Hiroshi

Il Cinema Ritrovato's selections hint at the films we might expect to see in rep theatres or in new DVD or Blu-ray editions

those whose only other exposure to Shimizu's work has been through DVD collections of his so-called 'children's' and 'travelling' films, was surprisingly bleak. Historically interesting rather than a major discovery perhaps, it is a grim tale set among a mining community in Japan's snowy north. Another rarity was a restoration of Mizoguchi Kenji's period melodrama *The Field Poppy* (1935). The director himself admitted that this was one of his weakest efforts, but it was still unmissable for Japanophiles. Also of primarily historical interest was *Dame Okichi* (1935), the sole director credit of Mizoguchi's sometime screenwriting collaborator Takashima Tatsunosuke. The film was apparently shot under Mizoguchi's supervision, though it was unclear how much he actually had to do with production – judging by the highly inconsistent style and camerawork, one might guess very little. Also in the programme were two endearing films in the vein of Ozu's 'student' comedies from director Gosho Heinosuke, another major figure of Japanese cinema of the period whose work has been almost impossible to see in the West, and the similarly light comedy *Happy Times* (1933), by the largely unknown director Nomura Hiromasa, about a newly-wed couple whose married bliss is disturbed by their friends and an uncle. Another featured director was Shimazu Yasujiro, whose *Our Neighbour, Miss Yae* (1934) was perhaps my personal favourite discovery in the programme, mixing Ozu-like observation of the lives of the lower middle classes with light humour – and boasting a wonderful comic cameo from Ozu regular Iida Choko as a neighbour who instigates a rambunctious drinking session.



Werner Hochbaum's *Brüder* (1929)

Other thematic and national programmes in this year's festival included a strand of classic Indian cinema and one looking at Polish New Wave cinema shot in CinemaScope, which included screenings of Andrzej Wajda's *Samson* (1961), Andrzej Munk's unfinished but unforgettable Holocaust film *Passenger* (1963), and, new to me, Aleksander Ford's war film *The First Day of Freedom* (1964). There were also retrospectives devoted to William Wellman and popular Italian director Riccardo Freda.

Dotted through the festival are unveilings of major new restorations by various archives from around the world. Among those I caught were an outstanding restoration by the Cineteca di Bologna and the Film Foundation's World Cinema Project of Sergei Parajanov's *The Colour of Pomegranates* (1968), another of King Hu's balletic *wuxia* classic *Dragon Inn* (1966) (marred only by faulty projection), an appropriately vibrant and colourful restoration of Chinese director Xie Jin's stirring, communist-inflected melodrama *Two Stage Sisters* (1964), and the faultless recent restoration of Sergio Leone's *A Fistful of Dollars* (1964) that was unveiled at this year's Cannes. Topping them all, however, were screenings of the new restorations of Jean Renoir's *Partie de campagne* (1936) and the proto-*noir La Chienne* (1931), and a particularly sharp looking restoration of John Ford's *My Darling Clementine* (1946) that approached the sublime.

A highlight of every day at Il Cinema Ritrovato comes in the evening, when Bologna's grand Piazza Maggiore plays host to a free outdoor screening on a giant screen. This year's line-up included a new restoration of *The Lady from Shanghai* (1947), the aforementioned *Le Jour se lève* and, most grandiose of all, Erich von Stroheim's *The Merry Widow* (1925), whose full orchestra accompaniment filled the Piazza to unforgettable effect.

YOU, THE JURY

FIDMarseille's determinedly unorthodox approach to programming, and jury selection, helps it to punch above its weight

By Neil Young

In Marseille – as Alain Charnier perhaps reflected at the end of *French Connection II* (1975), with 'Popeye' Doyle's bullet lodging in his heart – crime doesn't always pay. But it can have its perks, even after sentencing. Inmates of the area's biggest jail, Les Baumettes, provide one of the juries for the genially scruffy port's most important film festival, FIDMarseille, whose 25th edition ran in the first week of July.

Seeking the opinion of this most captive audience runs contrary to the image of film festivals as communal, social events. The Baumettes jury does not visit the public venues of FID, a consistently outstanding medium-sized festival that is unfairly overshadowed by Bologna's Il Cinema Ritrovato and Karlovy Vary, with which it overlaps every year. The inmates' auditorium is the prison's video workshop, operated year-round by Lieux Fictifs, a "laboratory of cinematographic research". It's located in the former high-security wing, where in 1977 the murderer Hamida Djandoubi became the last person to be guillotined in France.

Though the jury is anonymous, and never gets to hobnob with other prize-deciders or engage in post-screening discussion with the paying audience, the practice has much to recommend it, as a contribution to rehabilitation and as an illustration of how a film festival can connect with the wider community. But the practice seems to be restricted to Francophone countries – it has also been adopted at Amiens, Switzerland's Visions du Réel at Nyon and Montreal's RIDM, the last two explicitly dedicated to nonfiction cinema.

FIDMarseille itself is still often referred to as a documentary festival. But in 2011 artistic director Jean-Pierre Rehm, an Algeria-born 53-year-old of amiably no-nonsense mien who looks like he's stepped out of Claude Sautet's *Classe tous risques*, amended *Festival International Documentaire* to *Festival International de Cinéma* – since, he observed, so many films were "straddling the narrative and the descriptive". The same year, he introduced the Baumettes jury and the Prix Renaud Victor, named for an actor-director who spent two years at the jail working on the posthumously released documentary *De jour comme de nuit* (1992).

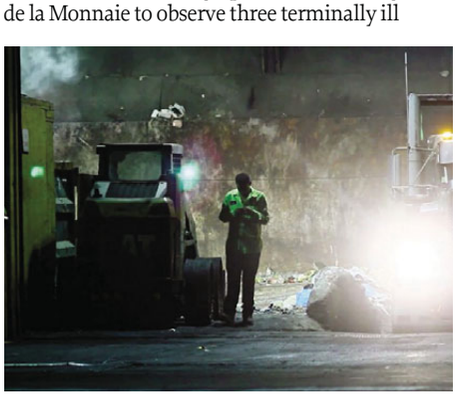
This year, the nine contenders for the prize included five of the 15 entries in the International Competition, among them Eduardo Williams's 28-minute *J'ai oublié*. FID's competitions always mix features, mid-lengthers and shorts, with an emphasis on the unorthodox. Last year's Grand Prix went to Mati Diop's 45-minute *Mille soleils*, a multi-layered homage to her uncle Djibril Diop Mambéty's 1973 Senegalese classic *Touki Bouki*. In 2012, Tunisian refugee-camp chronicle *Babylon* triumphed: two hours; numerous languages; zero subtitles. This year, the main competition jury, chaired by Wang Bing, played safe, picking Mohammad Ali Atassi and Ziad Homsi's dutiful

Syria in the shadows: Yassin al-Haj Saleh in *Our Terrible Country*

Competing with a slew of festivals, just weeks after Cannes, FID attracts an astonishing number of world premieres

if undeniably topical *Our Terrible Country*. This Syrian/Lebanese production follows dissident writer Yassin al-Haj Saleh from his home in war-blasted Douma, near Damascus, across country to Turkey, where the former political prisoner ends up in semi-inadvertent, rueful exile. An explosive dispatch from the rubble of Syria's civil war thus gradually shades into a quieter psychological profile, albeit one in which the co-directors allow their evident admiration for Saleh to cloud their objectivity.

The Baumettes jury preferred a more subtly radical International Competition contender, Jorge León's *Before We Go*, a 'documentary' of such carefully staged and overtly acknowledged artificiality that it could more accurately be termed a filmed series of 'happenings'. A million miles away from Frederick Wiseman's anthropological institution surveys, León's 83-minute *reverie concrète* goes behind the scenes at Brussels's elaborately opulent Théâtre Royal de la Monnaie to observe three terminally ill



Rough-edged: *Bx46*

pensioners therapeutically interacting with choreographers and performers in a self-aware but never self-conscious dance of death. It shared the prize with Joris Lachaise's study of a Dakar mental hospital, *Ce qu'il reste de la folie*.

Before We Go is a prime example of the category-blurring FID champions, in ways that have steadily increased its international profile since Rehm's arrival in 2002. At a time when festivals are getting bloated, FID stays lean: alongside this year's shorts and retrospectives (devoted to Marguerite Duras and African-American pioneer Oscar Micheaux), just 51 new mid/feature-length films, 26 of them world premieres. Given that it competes with a slew of nonfiction festivals, mere weeks after Cannes, it's astonishing that FID attracts so many world premieres and that their general level is so high.

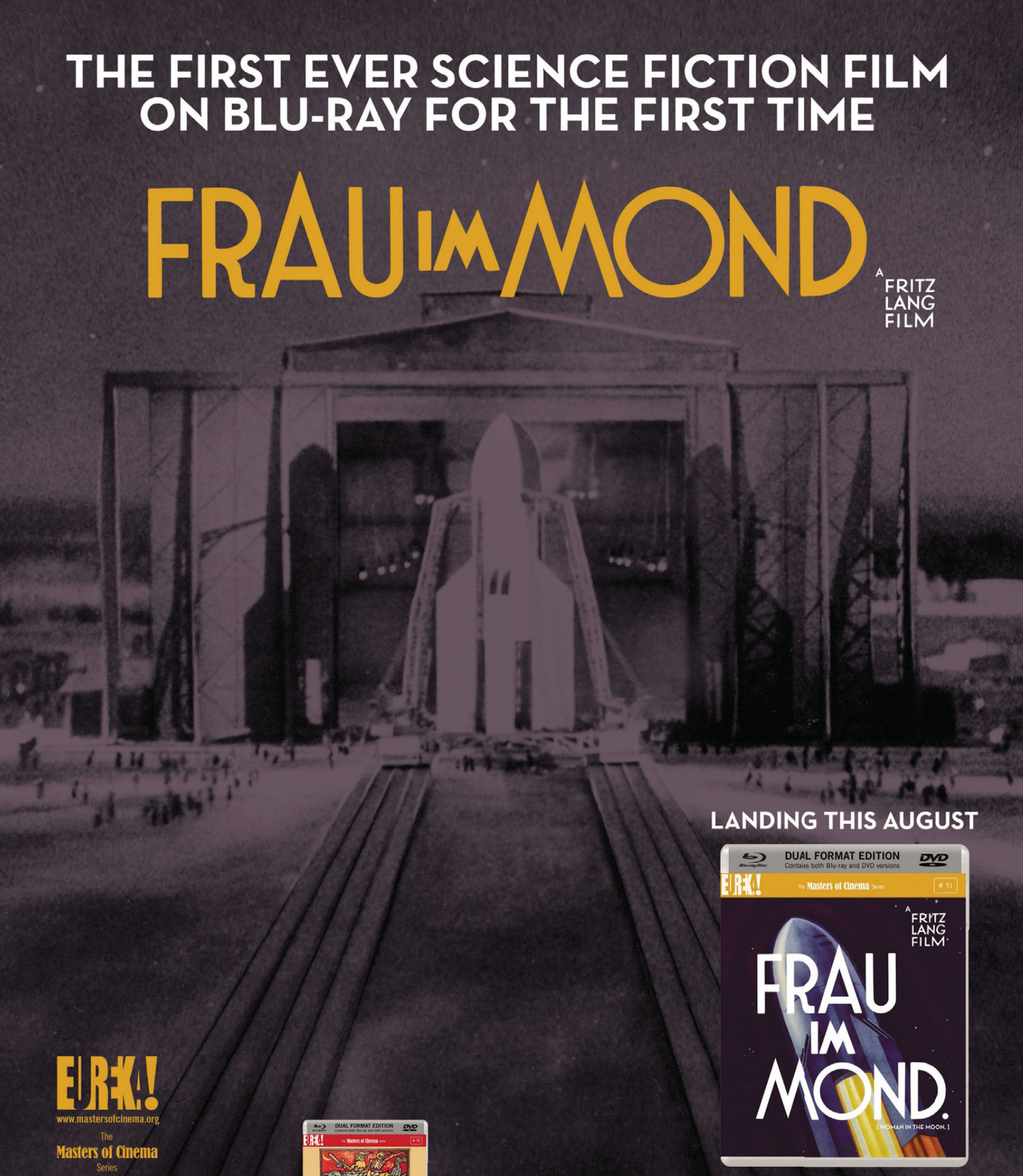
There are underwhelming selections at FID, but few of the outright stinkers that tarnish the reputations of bigger, flashier events. Intriguing titles pop up unannounced, from unheralded sources – such as Jérémie Brugidou and Fabien Clouette's *Bx46*, a rough-edged, briskly edited nocturnal immersion in the Hunts Point area of the Bronx. This largely industrial zone houses Fulton Fish Market, several waste-transfer facilities (the waste includes human faeces) and a modern version of the Victorian prison hulk: the Vernon C. Bain Center (VCBC), a vast barge moored in the East River just across from the more notorious penal environment of Rikers Island.

As with so many of the most rewarding 'straight' documentaries, the key word is access: the young French directors roam the fish market freely, eliciting vibrant testimony from grizzled, loquacious employees, and make numerous visits to a waste-transfer facility. But the VCBC is firmly off limits: wordless images of this blandly oppressive 'correctional facility' eloquently punctuate the illuminating stream of workers' testimonies. Even for the most intrepid documentarians, some doors remain shut.

THE FIRST EVER SCIENCE FICTION FILM ON BLU-RAY FOR THE FIRST TIME

FRAU IM MOND

A FRITZ LANG FILM

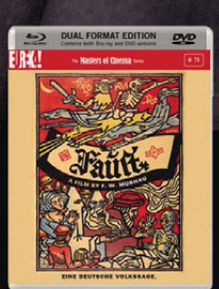


LANDING THIS AUGUST

EUREKA!
www.mastersofcinema.org
The Masters of Cinema Series

ALSO AVAILABLE AUGUST

Faust



IN CINEMAS AUGUST

Robert Wiene's
Das Cabinet des Dr. Caligari.

AVAILABLE FROM

amazon.co.uk

TALL TRUTHS

BEST DOCS EVER

What are the greatest documentaries ever made? Over the following 32 pages, we feature the votes of some of the 340 critics and filmmakers we polled in our search for authoritative answers

By Nick Bradshaw

This magazine has been conducting its famous once-a-decade poll of the greatest films in history for most of that history. Call this canon-making urge a sign of cinema's relative immaturity (our pollees seem to have struggled harder with their assignment as the movies have mounted up), but the exercise is as expansive as it is reductive, offering up in our 2012 poll more than 2,000 movies for estimation, as well as spotlighting a path into the film forest for those yet to enter.

Across all seven iterations of the poll, the fictional impulse in film has reigned, regardless of whether the fashion has been for neorealist fables of social hardship or for mazy myths of male obsession and power. Of course, it took the development of narrative fiction to persuade viewers that the new medium could be both sustainably entertaining (damsels in distress etc) and artistic (great players emoting in costume) – and perhaps even today we find it easier to recognise, and enjoy, art in cinema when it seems to spring fully formed from the mind of the auteur, rather than being coaxed, chivvied or scratched out from a world that does not show its true face readily.

Our 2012 poll, however, saw a blindsider in the advent of Dziga Vertov's *Man with a Movie Camera* in our top ten: not only a documentary of sorts, but an eight-decade-old Soviet constructivist silent, long snubbed as a formalist dead end. In our rising tide of mediation, with camera-phones in every pocket and the people's palace of YouTube in the sky, have we finally caught up with Vertov's vision of the city that films and sees itself?

Last year too saw further documentary incursions into the cinema mainstream. *The Act of Killing* (a hellish hall of mirrors refraction of *Man with a Movie Camera* that tries to redeem cinema from its own prodigality) topped this magazine's recent films-of-the-year poll (*S&S*, January) and enjoyed a year-long run at London's ICA, something not seen since the days of 1970s and 80s midnight movies. Gianfranco Rosi's serio-comic Roman rondelay *Sacro GRA* became the first documentary to win the Golden Lion at the Venice Film Festival, and documentary watchers found similar excitement in Lucien Castaing-Taylor and Véréna Paravel's *Leviathan*, a high-seas variation on Georges Franju's 1948 abattoir short *Le Sang des bêtes* that rekindled dreams of an unperformed 'direct cinema', wild and free, even as it found another hell of man and machines at the furthest remove from civilisation.

It's been seven years since our last documentary special; a decade since the box-office breakthroughs of Michael Moore and *March of the Penguins*, and the digital revolution that facilitated the serendipities and intrusions of a found-drama doc like *Capturing the Friedmans*. Documentary festivals and cinema strands are burgeoning; the mass media's escape into trivia and spectacle seems to have stoked a revival of the modern equivalent of the pre-TV newsreel cinema for audiences hungry for reflections on the world. Documentarians in turn have been energised by this attention, as Robert Greene argues in his whirlwind 15-year history of our progress to documentary enlightenment over pages 52-55.

DESIGN, ART DIRECTION & PHOTOGRAPHY BY WHY NOT ASSOCIATES

FUJIFILM D321
Digital BETACAM
Digital
18.03.68
The Demonstration
Sheppard & McDowell
Smoke Master
Digi Beta 625/50 4:3ff
18.03.68
Primary
R.Dyes 1960
Title: DON'T LOOK BACK
MAN ON WIRE
DIRECTED BY: JAMES MARSH
DISCOVERY FILMS
MAGNOLIA PICTURES
ICON PRODUCTIONS
DIAPHANA FILMS
Dolby
A-TYPE AUDIO
NOISE REDUCTION
THE BATTLE OF THE SOMME
MALINS & MCDOWELL
BRITISH TOPICAL COMMITTEE
FOR WAR FILMS
74 MINUTES
21-08-11
LEMON DROPS SUB 7

And what earlier nonfiction marvels has time been kind to? Time, we decided, to canvass lots of experts.

There is some irony in trying to set in stone something that has always mutated in the margins of cinema. It's nearly 90 years since John Grierson started pushing his 'D' word at us – initially as an adjective, 'documentary value', in relation to Flaherty's 1926 film *Moana* – and it remains descriptively nebulous, as you might expect of a label that attempts to encompass multiple permutations of reportage, perception, interpretation and imagination in a world made more uncertain by the invention of the movie camera. At any rate, we ducked the challenge and invited our voters to determine their own definition of the term, which is why we found James Benning writing back with the assertion that "all films are fictions", whereas Gabe Klinger (channelling Godard) submitted, "but all films are documentaries!" You'll find more thoughts on both the word and the art in the voters' comments overleaf.

Perhaps all documentaries are documentaries of sorts – partial, compromised, and all the more compelling for it. Ditto these polls, which are certainly not as ideally balanced and populated across individual and national identities as they're first conceived. What we have here are the results of and a selection from twin surveys of 237 international critics, curators and academics, and 103 filmmakers, of a more or less documentary bent, who agreed to nominate ten of the greatest documentaries ever made – "at any length, for any outlet, including television". Despite our efforts, the voting pool is still too Anglophone, unsurprising given our networks. Still, as Mark Cousins discusses on page 11, the poll at least takes a stab at extending the canon: we find three Latin American films, two from Iran, single titles from China, Japan and Armenia, and the quasi-Indonesian *The Act of Killing* in the top 50. Thirty-seven per cent of our voters are women, a better rate than in our 2012 poll and reflective of greater female participation away from the big business of fiction. The results show that too (see the box opposite) – though arguably not enough.

James Benning wrote back that 'all films are fictions', whereas Gabe Klinger submitted, 'but all films are documentaries!'

We hoped to hear more about the hidden gems of broadcast television – Jeremy Isaacs's *The World at War* series was the most noted – but there are some eye-openers in here: maybe Viktor Kossakovsky's *Belovy* (a filmmakers' favourite), maybe Artavazd Pelechian's *Seasons*, high in both polls. These are films whose legends must have been burnished far from the mainstream of movie culture – whispered in documentary circles? Studied in academia? We were similarly surprised by the strength of the consensus that emerged around our top titles: ballots would come in listing *Man with a Movie Camera*, *Shoah*, *Sans soleil*, *Night and Fog* and *The Thin Blue Line* before they got to any other titles. These, it turns out, are the ironclad classics of documentary; Vertov's film alone garnered votes from almost half of all the critics. Brian Winston recounts its fall and rise on page 38. But we were also delighted by the relative youth of many of the titles: 11 of the top 50 were made since the year 2000.

So this is something to delve into – and kick against. Documentary filmmakers, meanwhile, will be getting back to doing that with the ever-changing world. Indeed, as Charlotte Cook explores on page 48, the job of long-form investigative journalism increasingly seems to fall to filmmakers independent of, and unprotected by, the traditional media bastions: do we need to extend them our reporting safeguards? Her litmus test is Laura Poitras, confidante of Edward Snowden and a single woman with a movie camera now locked in an unequal battle with the state with a surveillance dragnet. As we've been learning, the dream of mass observation, of fly-on-the-wall documentary transparency, is alive and kicking in the cellars of the Five Eyes's monitoring machines. It's pure documentation, perhaps – but without the participatory audience, it's just not cinema.

WHERE THE TRUTH LIES ***Grizzly Man*** **director Werner Herzog (above) outlined his approach to documentary in his 1999 Minnesota Declaration, claiming, 'There is such a thing as poetic, ecstatic truth. It is mysterious and elusive, and can be reached only through fabrication and imagination'**

Further features and videos inspired by our Documentary Poll will also be published at bfi.org.uk/sightandsound during August

CRITICS' TOP 50

1	Man with a Movie Camera
2	Shoah
3	Sans soleil
4	Night and Fog
5	The Thin Blue Line
6	Chronicle of a Summer
7	Nanook of the North
8	The Gleaners and I
=9	Dont Look Back
=9	Grey Gardens
11	The Sorrow and the Pity
=12	Grizzly Man
=12	Land Without Bread
=12	Nostalgia for the Light
=15	F for Fake
=15	The Up series
=17	Hoop Dreams
=17	West of the Tracks
=19	The Act of Killing
=19	The Battle of Chile
=19	The House Is Black
=19	Listen to Britain
23	The Emperor's Naked Army Marches On
=24	Harlan County U.S.A.
=24	Histoire(s) du Cinéma
=24	Salesman
27	Titicut Follies
=28	Capturing the Friedmans
=28	Gimme Shelter
30	Leviathan
=31	Lessons of Darkness
=31	The Quince Tree Sun
=33	Night Mail
=33	Primary
=35	Crumb
=35	A Diary for Timothy
=37	Close-Up
=37	The Fog of War
=37	Los Angeles Plays Itself
=37	Man on Wire
=37	Moi, un noir
=37	Portrait of Jason
=37	A Propos de Nice
=37	Roger & Me
=37	Le Sang des bêtes
=37	The War Game
=47	Culloden
=47	Diaries, Notes & Sketches: Walden
=47	D'est
=47	Handsworth Songs
=47	The Hour of the Furnaces
=47	Seasons
=47	Triumph of the Will
=47	Waltz with Bashir
=47	Welfare
=47	Workers Leaving the Lumière Factory

FILMMAKERS' TOP 30

1	Man with a Movie Camera
2	Sans soleil
3	The Thin Blue Line
=4	Night and Fog
=4	Shoah
=6	Salesman
=6	Titicut Follies
=8	Dont Look Back
=8	Man of Aran
=8	Nanook of the North
=11	Belovy
=11	Chronicle of a Summer
=11	Grey Gardens
=14	Burden of Dreams
=14	Darwin's Nightmare
=14	Hoop Dreams
=14	Le Sang des bêtes
=14	Seasons
=19	The Battle of Chile
=19	The Gleaners and I
=19	Grizzly Man
=19	Koyaanisqatsi
=19	Roger & Me
=19	Sherman's March
=19	Triumph of the Will
=19	Welfare
=27	When We Were Kings
=28	The Act of Killing
=28	Gimme Shelter
=28	Harlan County U.S.A.
=28	Land Without Bread
=28	Leviathan
=28	Little Dieter Needs to Fly
=28	The Sorrow and the Pity
=28	West of the Tracks

ROGER & ME

TOP 10s

TOP 10 DOCUMENTARIES BY WOMEN

1	The Gleaners and I (*Varda*)
2	Grey Gardens (*co-dirs Hovde & Meyer*)
3	The House Is Black (*Farokhzad*)
4	Salesman (*co-dir Zwerin*)
5	Harlan County U.S.A. (*Koppel*)
6	Gimme Shelter (*co-dir Zwerin*)
7	Leviathan (*co-dir Paravel*)
8	Portrait of Jason (*Clarke*)
9	Triumph of the Will (*Riefenstahl*)
10	D'est (*Akerman*)

As derived from votes cast in the critics' poll

TOP FILMS BY NON-WESTERN FILMMAKERS

1	Man with a Movie Camera
2	Nostalgia for the Light
3	West of the Tracks
4	The Battle of Chile
=4	The House Is Black
6	The Emperor's Naked Army Marches On
7	Close-Up
8	The Hour of the Furnaces
=8	Seasons
=8	Waltz with Bashir

As derived from votes cast in the critics' poll

TOP 10 FILMMAKERS

1	Dziga Vertov
2	Chris Marker
3	Claude Lanzmann
=3	Alain Resnais
5	Errol Morris
6	Werner Herzog
7	Jean Rouch
8	Frederick Wiseman
9	Robert Flaherty
=9	Patricio Guzmán

As derived from votes cast in the critics' poll

FILMMAKERS' TOP 10 FILMMAKERS

1	Frederick Wiseman
2	Dziga Vertov
3	Werner Herzog
=3	Chris Marker
5	Albert & David Maysles
6	Errol Morris
7	Robert Flaherty
8	Alain Resnais
9	Jean Rouch
10	Claude Lanzmann

CRITICS' POLL

Please note: the 50 entries below represent just a few edited highlights of the 237 voting entries we received for the 2014 critics' documentary poll. The full versions of all the entries will be posted online on 14 August

CAMERON BAILEY

Artistic director, Toronto International Film Festival, Canada

Sans soleil (*Marker*)
Handsworth Songs (*Akomfrah*)
Night and Fog (*Resnais*)
Bowling for Columbine (*Moore*)
The Up series (*Apted & Almond*)
The Gleaners and I (*Varda*)
Very Nice, Very Nice (*Lipsett*)
Kanehsatake – 270 Years of Revolution (*Obomsawin*)
Titicut Follies (*Wiseman*)
Man with a Movie Camera (*Vertov*)

Documentary has done much to keep cinema relevant. In places where not just the abuse, but the simple exercise of power continues to destroy lives, it has much more to do. Long may it reign.

LUCIANO BARISONE

Director, Visions du Réel, Switzerland/Italy

History of Post-war Japan as Told by a Bar Hostess (*Imamura*)
Peasant Elegy (*Sokurov*)
The Last Bolshevik (*Marker*)
Ernesto 'Che' Guevara: The Bolivian Diary (*Dindo*)
The House Is Black (*Farokhzad*)
Santiago (*Salles*)
The Lost World (*de Seta*)
Every Little Thing (*Philibert*)
Nostalgia for the Light (*Guzmán*)
Salesman (*Maysles brothers & Zwerin*)

I don't like the word 'documentary'. I find it old and restrictive. I prefer the French term *cinéma du réel*, which better corresponds to the richness, variety and indistinct nature of this cinematic form. Actually, for me, it is cinema *tout court*, as it was the original form of the seventh art at a time when no practical distinctions were made simply to distinguish one product from another on the market.

It's *cinéma du réel* because it deals with reality, but it's also a genre that unites artistic forms, from animation to painting or plastic art, from treatments of historical material to literature, theatre and poetry. Yet it is far removed from reality as it is born of an original sin of sorts: it stages situations, as those familiar with the history of the various versions of the Lumières' short *Workers Leaving the Lumière Factory* will know.

It is therefore a cinematic form that respects reality solely in substance while manipulating its formal aspect in the course of portraying it.

My choice is focused on the anthropocentrism of cinema, on the fact that cinema, like the other arts, is made by human beings for other human beings. Therefore, in order to be useful and impactful, art of this sort must be structured on the basis of the classic art of storytelling, and as such requires stories that are modern in nature, yet have a kind of mythical substratum. In other words, these films represent a world that is marked by more than what is apparent and immanent; they also possess a hidden and transcendental aspect that evocatively harks back to eternal existential questions.

CHRIS BOECKMANN

Programmer, True/False Film Fest, USA

Seventeen (*DeMott & Kreines*)
Belovy (*Kossakovsky*)
Gimme Shelter (*Maysles brothers & Zwerin*)
Farrebique (*Rouquier*)
A Moment of Innocence (*Makhmalbaf*)
The Quince Tree Sun (*Erice*)
A Married Couple (*King*)
Disorder (*Huang*)
Diary 1973-83 (*Perlov*)
Bread Day (*Dvortsevoy*)

Film culture marginalises nonfiction. I suspect one reason is that we feel more comfortable analysing screenplays, sets and performances (work we attribute to conscientious artists) than unscripted developments, natural settings and fellow human beings. In the past year, I've noticed some signs, including this poll, that nonfiction cinema's cachet is on the rise. I'm not sure why, but I hope I'm correct.

I spend most of my viewing time watching 'documentary' (I should note that several of the directors on my list don't use this term, eg Allan King's 'actuality dramas', Sergei Dvortsevoy's 'life cinema'). That's not because of its educational value (I also read newspapers), but because I find it thrilling to watch gifted cinematographers and editors embrace spontaneity and wrestle with nature. I mean 'nature' in a very broad sense: plants, animals, buildings, weather, disease, time, other humans, ourselves.

Apologies to the many major filmmakers I've knowingly and unknowingly left off this rough list. If I revisited this in the morning, the only film I'm certain would remain is *Seventeen*.

PETER BRADSHAW

Critic, the *Guardian*, UK

Dont Look Back (*Pennebaker*)
Dreams of a Life (*Morley*)
Listen to Britain (*Jennings & McAllister*)
Our Daily Bread (*Geyrhalter*)
The Act of Killing (*Oppenheimer, Cynn & anonymous*)
Fahrenheit 9/11 (*Moore*)
Grey Gardens (*Maysles brothers, Hovde & Meyer*)
Injustice (*Fero & Mehmood*)
Crumb (*Zwigoff*)
Grizzly Man (*Herzog*)

NICOLE BRENEZ

Teacher and curator, France

The Wave (*Marey*)
Balle traversant une bulle de savon (*Bull & Marey*)
Rien que les heures (*Cavalcanti*)
Que Viva Mexico! (*Eisenstein*)
Afrique 50 (*Vautier*)
Aguaespejo granadino (*Val del Omar*)
The Hour of the Furnaces (*Getino & Solanas*)
Histoire(s) du cinéma (*Godard*)
Perfect Day (*Leccia*)
Leviathan (*Paravel & Castaing-Taylor*)

Etymologically, 'documentary' comes from '*docere*', to teach and transmit. So a great documentary is an intervention in the field of knowledge. It shows how image and sound can question what a fact is, remind us of the plasticity of the real, cinematise our collective history and testify to the resources of the human mind, from rationality to psychic mysteries.

RICHARD BRODY

Critic, *New Yorker*, USA

Shoah (*Lanzmann*)
Histoire(s) du cinéma (*Godard*)
Portrait of Jason (*Clarke*)
The Children Were Watching (*Leacock*)
Chronicle of a Summer (*Rouch & Morin*)
Night and Fog (*Resnais*)
Numéro zéro (*Eustache & Arrieta*)
Strange Victory (*Hurwitz*)
The Emperor's Naked Army Marches On (*Hara*)
Welfare (*Wiseman*)

The essence of documentary is not invention but reinvention, not in the mere fact of recording events as they transpire, but in reconceiving the idea of recording in the act of doing so. That's why so many of the greatest dramatic filmmakers' work seems, in retrospect, to be documentary; why, in compiling a list, I found myself wondering whether the films of John Cassavetes and Robert Bresson, Jean Renoir and Alexander Dovzhenko, Ozu Yasujiro and Rainer Werner Fassbinder could be considered – and how things might have been if they had sought to make documentaries in the strict sense (and likely, in the process, have resisted the strictness of that sense).

The high intellectual line of the conception of documentary as an aesthetic and a theoretical achievement runs from the birth of the cinema through the New Wave, passing through the Cinémathèque of Henri Langlois and the reflexive ethnography of Jean Rouch, which is why there's a surprising (even to me) number of French films on my list. But many of the films here imply many others; for instance, where there's Richard Leacock, there's also Robert Drew, D.A. Pennebaker, Albert and David Maysles, Barbara Kopple, Sarah Kernochan and Howard Smith, and many more American documentaries and their filmmakers, to the present day. Fictions have their built-in specificity; documentary is, even more, the birth of an idea, a school, a future history.

PHILIP CHEAH

Critic and curator, Southeast Asian Film Festival, Singapore

Final Solution (*Sharma*)
Independent Lens Imelda (*Diaz*)
Route 181: Fragments of a Journey in Palestine-Israel (*Khleifi & Sivan*)
Passabe (*Leong & Lee*)
Censor Must Die (*K*)
Prison and Paradise (*Haryanto*)
The Burnt Theatre (*Panh*)
Manufacturing Consent: Noam Chomsky and the Media (*Achbar & Wintonick*)
Arabs & Terrorism (*Haddad*)
President Mir Qanbar (*Shirvani*)

Documentaries have become more vital in recent history simply because a lot of faith has been lost in the monolithic mass media. Documentaries are bringing us the news and stories that we don't easily get access to anymore. It's no wonder that more and more films are plagued by censorship. For a film such as *The Act of Killing*, Joshua Oppenheimer's Indonesian co-directors and collaborators remained anonymous on the film credits for fear of retribution. Many more documentaries cannot even premiere in their own countries of origin, because of censorship threats, and have to find their place elsewhere first, in the hope of returning home some day. In short, documentaries challenge us with this simple question: "What do you believe? And why?" Somewhere out there, these films show us that there are other truths.

Do we need a documentary 'canon'? Only if it will help bring back some of the many great works that have been pushed aside by fiction feature imperialism

Ian Christie

IAN CHRISTIE

Writer and academic, UK

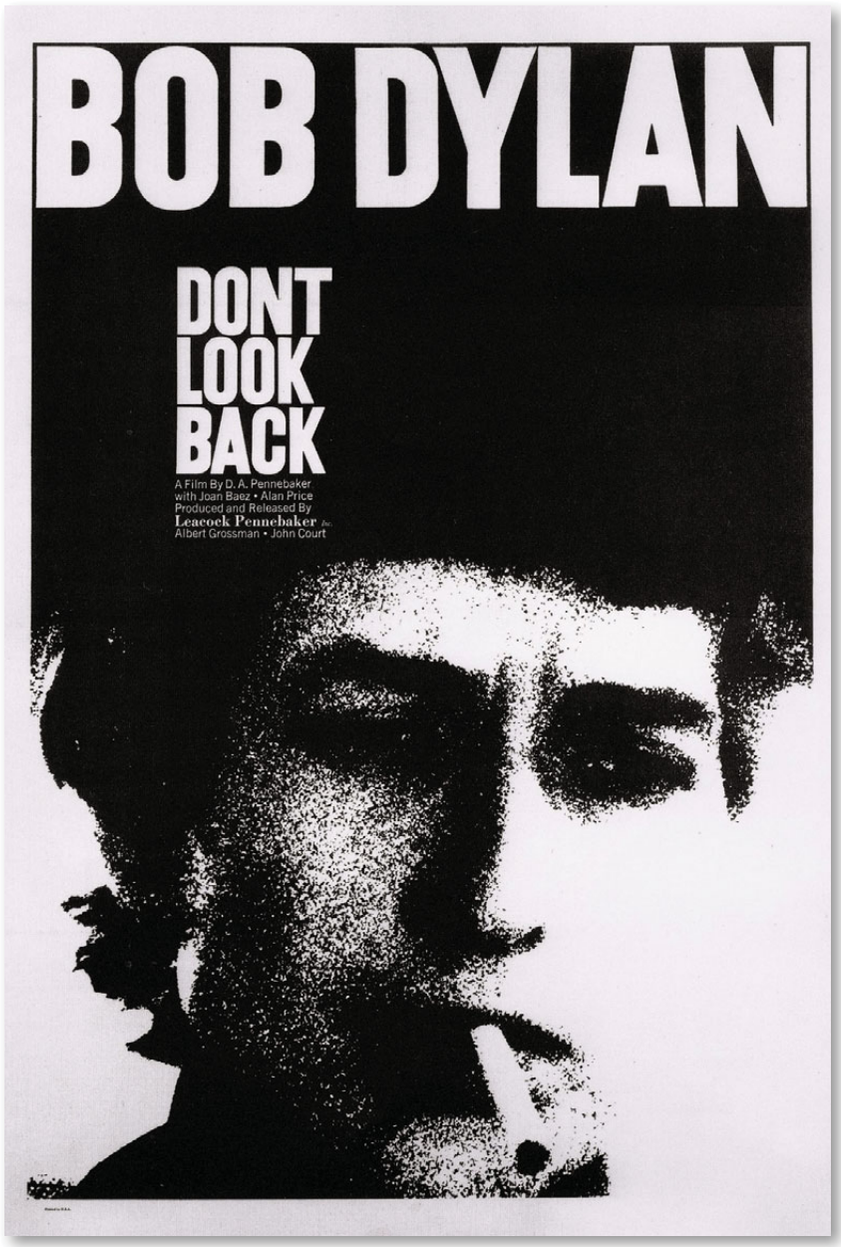
A Diary for Timothy (*Jennings*)
Chronicle of a Summer (*Rouch & Morin*)
A Life Apart: Anxieties in a Trawling Community (*Grigsby*)
From the Pole to the Equator (*Gianikian & Ricci Lucchi*)
Night and Fog (*Resnais*)
Of Great Events and Ordinary People (*Ruiz*)
The Gleaners and I (*Varda*)
No Direction Home: Bob Dylan (*Scorsese*)
Lessons of Darkness (*Herzog*)
Our Century (*Pelechian*)

The only way to make lists like this is to follow intuition, and then see where it has led. Having decided that I couldn't choose among the films of the truly great documentarists – Flaherty, Vertov, Painlevé, Marker, Sokurov, Errol Morris – and that I didn't want the whole list to be weighted towards the silent era, I seem to have ended up with a concentration on highly reflexive films, almost all re-presenting their material reflectively. Many of them could be called 'essay films', as is the modern trend. But isn't all documentary really a form of essay, chewing over some material found in the world, rather than creating its own worlds? And many of the greatest docs are precisely shorts rather than features.

The other major problem is what to do about television, which has been the main medium of documentary since the 1960s. I have 'rescued' just two films, Grigsby's and Ruiz's, from the oblivion that is the fate of much TV documentary, but it could have been much more. A shortage too, I notice, of sponsored films, which are often adopted as documentaries after their commercial life is over.

And what about the amateurs? If I had space, I'd have included Rosie Newman's *Britain at War*, an extraordinary record intrepidly filmed in colour, but there's a vast amount of anonymous footage building up in archives that is also beginning to be recognised as part of the 'documentary' legacy.

Do we need a documentary 'canon'? Only if it will help bring back into view some of the many great works that have been pushed aside by fiction feature imperialism. Long live the perfectly formed documentary short.



BFI NATIONAL ARCHIVE (2)

=9

DONT LOOK BACK

D.A. PENNEBAKER, 1967

Bob Dylan has been many things to many people over his lifetime, not least to himself. The man born Robert Zimmerman knows well the value of obscuring myths and shifting personas, and part of the fascination of D.A. Pennebaker's pioneering Direct Cinema account of Dylan's 1965 tour of Britain is the way it captures the singer transforming on camera into 'Dylan', the unreachably cool, detached yet wired, lightning-in-a-bottle young genius who, as Greil Marcus memorably wrote, "seemed less to occupy a turning point in cultural space and time than to be that turning point."

The persona is partly an armour to deal with the stresses of fame, and to pop the fawning earnestness of everyone he meets, but it's also a knowing cinematic construct, one we suspect Pennebaker understood and encouraged. Not that the film is any more flattering or comfortable than, say, *Grey Gardens*; this 'Dylan' can be confrontational and even mercilessly cruel, as when he immediately spikes Donovan's earnest recital of 'A Song for You' by unveiling his own new 'It's All Over Now, Baby Blue'. But the film also captures a genius at the height of his inspiration and, in the card-cued alleyway 'performance' of 'Subterranean Homesick Blues', left us with one of the iconic images of rock history.

James Bell

=9

GREY GARDENS

DAVID AND ALBERT MAYSLES, ELLEN HOVDE AND MUFFIE MEYER, 1975

It's a documentary, but you couldn't make it up. Imagine if John Waters shot a script by Tennessee Williams and it was broadcast in a TV slot usually reserved for *The Hoarder Next Door* or *How Clean Is Your House?* The Maysles' best-loved film (co-directed with Ellen Hovde and Muffie Meyer) is a fly-in-a-Harvey-Wallbanger look at the world of Jackie O.'s eccentric cousins, Big Edie and Little Edie (and their interloper, 'the Marble Faun'). It's fingernails-down-blackboard wonderful, as the Edies reminisce, sing, dance, yell at each other and watch approvingly as cats and raccoons befoul their rotting Long Island retreat.

Little Edie, still stunningly beautiful at 56, models a series of extraordinary tied-together outfits and turbans. We never do find out what happened to her hair. Big Edie appears to wear very little around her massive girth. The filmmakers look away when one of her breasts falls out. It's a cult classic, wildly entertaining and camp as Christmas. It's been made into a stage musical, and dramatised for HBO. But it's also a film that allows women to speak in their own crazy voices and, despite the backdrop of high society, it captures universal truths about family ties.

Jane Giles

8 THE GLEANERS AND I

AGNES VARDA, 2000

"This is my project: to film with one hand my other hand." Delivered in voiceover by the filmmaker, this is the essence of *Les Glaneurs et la Glaneuse*, Agnès Varda's handheld DV *autoportrait* of the artist as an older woman. But what seems small and simple, albeit rigorous in its intimacy, brilliantly encompasses agriculture, art history, class politics, ecology, economics, recycling raps and (via an interview with a descendant of Louis Daguerre) the origins of cinema.

In passionately identifying herself with misshapen potatoes, Varda recuperates a useful beauty, inventing an austerity cinema that – in its rich digressions and layers of references – is itself never austere. She follows foragers and freegans who could have stepped out of Millet's painting *The Gleaners*, a *trompe l'oeil* effect with which the film plays, as Varda herself becomes a gleaner, yoking oil painting and observations of those living on the social margins.

The hand that 'catches' lorries (in a witty trick of scale) also catches us; heart-shaped potatoes touch our hearts. Caught in the hand that Varda films are traces of age and effort, of earth and art. This small embodied observation connects us to cinematic and cosmic mysteries of time, work and grace.

Sophie Mayer

BFI NATIONAL ARCHIVE (3)

7 NANOOK OF THE NORTH

ROBERT FLAHERTY, 1922

When Nanook, the hunter-hero of Robert Flaherty's 1922 Inuit documentary, is filmed straining to land a seal with a line dropped through a hole in the ice, his tumbles call to mind the era's beloved slapstick comedy. And well it might – there's no seal on the end of Nanook's line, just a group of friends giving it a few well-timed tugs. And Nanook is not Nanook, but a man named Allakariallak. The wife who chews his boots? Not his, though she may have shared Flaherty's bed. More to the point, in 1922, Inuit of the Canadian Arctic hunted with guns, not spears – so the lo-tech kill scenes shot by Flaherty for the movie exposed everyone involved to considerable, and needless, danger.

Nanook of the North is notorious for its fakery, its open-faced igloo and cutesy depiction of the Inuit as untouched by Western culture. But the traits that made it a hit in 1922 have given this documentary a timeless appeal. Flaherty's photography is beautiful, and his make-believe methods captured the traditional skills of Allakariallak's ancestors on film before they died out altogether; to the cinema audiences of the time, *Nanook* was a journey to a foreign and fascinating place. This documentary may not play by today's rules, but it continues to function as a living museum, animating a world that was almost gone then – entirely lost now.

Pamela Hutchinson

MICHEL CIMENT

Editor, *Positif*, France

Amsterdam Global Village (*van der Keuken*)
The Lion Hunters (*Rouch*)
Caught in the Act (*Depardon*)
Man with a Movie Camera (*Vertov*)
The Memory of Justice (*Ophüls*)
Nanook of the North (*Flaherty*)
Night and Fog (*Resnais*)
The Moontrap (*Perrault & Brault*)
Sans soleil (*Marker*)
Welfare (*Wiseman*)

GEORGE CLARK

Assistant curator of film, Tate Modern, UK

Too Early, Too Late (*Huillet & Straub*)
Le Cochon (*Eustache & Barjol*)
79 primaveras (*Alvarez*)
A Portrait of Ga (*Tait*)
The House Is Black (*Farokhzad*)
Les Maîtres fous (*Rouch*)
Beginning (*Pelechian*)
Nightcleaners (*Berwick Street Film Collective*)
One Sixth of the Earth (*Vertov*)
Standard Gauge (*Fisher*)

One of the most important developments in the culture around film and video in recent years has been the renavigation of the history and definition of the documentary. The separation of whole histories of practice under designations such as documentary, experimental film, ethnographic film etc, has led to a dilution of what we hold cinema to be. The richness, diversity and importance of works understood as documentary are crucial to any argument of the potential of cinema. As Jean-Luc Godard states, "All great fiction films tend towards documentary, just as all great documentaries tend toward fiction... each word implies a part of the other. And he who opts wholeheartedly for one, necessarily finds the other at the end of his journey."

PAMELA COHN

Writer, producer and nonfiction filmmaker, Germany

Ghosts of Cité Soleil (*Leth & Loncarevic*)
Night and Fog (*Resnais*)
The 3 Rooms of Melancholia (*Honkasalo*)
Little Dieter Needs to Fly (*Herzog*)
Iraq in Fragments (*Longley*)
My Country, My Country (*Poitras*)
Tarnation (*Caouette*)
The Act of Killing (*Oppenheimer, Cynn & anonymous*)
In Vanda's Room (*Costa*)
The Mouth of the Wolf (*Marcello*)

It is glorious, always, to pay homage to seminal or groundbreaking work that has set benchmarks of excellence – but considering the wealth of superb but often woefully under-regarded nonfiction produced in the last couple of decades, I feel this list affords an opportunity to expand the conversation beyond the stifling confines of the question, "What should we call it?"

These are very personal choices, films that have provided me with joy, with excitement, not only for their artistic excellence, but for the deeply personal and creative risks their makers took in telling profoundly human stories. What is on offer in all these films are magnificent, transcendent performances – on both sides of the camera lens. That's why they're good films. And that's why we should be able to call them whatever we like. As well, we should always be thinking about how to expand upon the existing 'canon', working to keep it as fresh and relevant as the form deserves.

JOHN CORNER

Documentary academic, UK

Man with a Movie Camera (*Vertov*)
Housing Problems (*Elton & Anstey*)
The Sorrow and the Pity (*Ophüls*)
Fahrenheit 9/11 (*Moore*)
Man on Wire (*Marsh*)
Living on the Edge (*Grigsby*)
Police (*Stewart & Graef*)
Listen to Britain (*Jennings & McAllister*)
The Thin Blue Line (*Morris*)
The Up series (*Apted & Almond*)

It's often better to think about 'documentariness', those qualities that comprise the documentary dimensions of very different kinds of film and television, than to regard 'documentary' as a category name. This still recognises the distinctive achievement of documentary projects internationally, but it avoids getting hooked in to definitional disputes. It also allows us to note that within television there is probably now as much 'documentariness' outside of programmes classified as documentary as within them.

We will always tend to judge documentary work in relation to two broad sets of criteria – those concerning a film's own qualities as the product of creative crafting, and those concerning the thematic importance of what it says about the world. Sometimes judgements on both coincide, sometimes there are different, perhaps contrasting, assessments to be made.

Whatever, the documentary ambition continues to pose an exciting range of challenges for audiovisual work, subject to regular renewal and debate. Developments in 'reality TV' have been seen to lie outside of documentary space, perhaps undercutting its goals and its perceived integrity, but they have also been seen as, in part, a renewal of documentary forms and approaches, bringing a welcome re-engagement with popular culture.

NOAH COWAN

Executive director, San Francisco Film Society, USA/Canada

Powers of Ten (*Eames*)
Night and Fog (*Resnais*)
Blue (*Jarman*)
Fast, Cheap & Out of Control (*Morris*)
Lessons of Darkness (*Herzog*)
Paris Is Burning (*Livingston*)
The Sorrow and the Pity (*Ophüls*)
When the Levees Broke: A Requiem in Four Acts (*Lee*)
Cocksucker Blues (*Frank & Seymour*)
Salam Cinéma (*Makhmalbaf*)

I found this a tougher list to compile than the recent *S&S* 'Greatest films of all time' exercise. Many documentary filmmakers have a body of work that intersects elegantly so it's tough to tease out one film from, say, Werner Herzog.

I also have a nagging suspicion that we cannot say much about early cinema in this context. Are Vertov et al convincing relatives of contemporary documentary makers? Something about the limits of modernism seems to be at play here... but that is why such listmaking and the debates that follow have enormous value. '*Chapeau!*' indeed to *Sight & Sound* for this necessary, if painful, challenge. Now to live with my regrets...

HEATHER CROALL

Director, Sheffield Doc/Fest, UK

Grey Gardens (*Maysles brothers, Hovde & Meyer*)
Grizzly Man (*Herzog*)
The Thin Blue Line (*Morris*)
Le Joli Mai (*Marker & Lhomme*)
Sisters in Law (*Ayisi & Longinotto*)
The Leader, His Driver and the Driver's Wife (*Broomfield*)
When We Were Kings (*Gast*)
Rats in the Ranks (*Connolly & Anderson*)
The Square (*Noujaim*)
Crumb (*Zwigoff*)

MARIA DELGADO

Academic and critic, UK/Spain

Land Without Bread (*Buñuel*)
Ocaña, retrat intermitent (*Pons*)
Work in Progress (*Guerín*)
Man of Aran (*Flaherty*)
Stop Making Sense (*Demme*)
Shoah (*Lanzmann*)
The Times of Harvey Milk (*Epstein*)
F for Fake (*Welles*)
Titicut Follies (*Wiseman*)
Night and Fog (*Resnais*)

How do we see the world? The documentaries I love are about seeing things differently, about questioning assumptions and viewpoints, about exploring how art and lies interact and how understandings of 'reality' shift and mutate.

The films I have selected allow me to feel I have been given privileged access to a unique event (as with *Stop Making Sense*) or moment in time (*Work in Progress*, *Ocaña, Land Without Bread*). They inspire me to think about ways of making a difference (*The Times of Harvey Milk*) or about how to represent that which is seen to lie outside of representation (*Night and Fog*, *Shoah*). They reflect in clear, unflinching ways on how society shapes the individual (*Titicut Follies*). Or they are simply about the process of filmmaking itself (*F for Fake*) – and isn't all cinema, to some degree or other, about forgery, fiction and fibs and that all too delicate (and even dangerous) line between representation and the real?

STEPHANE DELORME

Editor, *Cahiers du cinéma*, France

Les Hautes solitudes (*Garrel*)
Les Maîtres fous (*Rouch*)
Night and Fog (*Resnais*)
Sans soleil (*Marker*)
Gimme Shelter (*Maysles brothers & Zwerin*)
Milestones (*Kramer*)
Magino Village: A Tale (*Ogawa*)
Man of Aran (*Flaherty*)
Land Without Bread (*Buñuel*)
Grizzly Man (*Herzog*)

ALLY DERKS

Director, International Documentary Film Festival Amsterdam (IDFA), Netherlands

Belovy (*Kossakovsky*)
The Act of Killing (*Oppenheimer, Cynn & anonymous*)
Episode III: Enjoy Poverty (*Martens*)
O Amor Natural (*Honigmann*)
Gimme Shelter (*Maysles brothers & Zwerin*)
The Emperor's Naked Army Marches On (*Hara*)
Hoop Dreams (*James*)
Tanjuska and the 7 Devils (*Honkasalo*)
Sisters in Law (*Ayisi & Longinotto*)
Losses to Be Expected (*Seidl*)

ELENA FORTES

Director, Ambulante Documentary Film Festival, Mexico

The Act of Killing (*Oppenheimer, Cynn & anonymous*)
The House Is Black (*Farokhzad*)
Shoah (*Lanzmann*)
Cave of Forgotten Dreams (*Herzog*)
Sans soleil (*Marker*)
Santiago (*Salles*)
Steam of Life (*Berghäll & Hotakainen*)
Chronicle of a Summer (*Rouch & Morin*)
The Emperor's Naked Army Marches On (*Hara*)
Leviathan (*Paravel & Castaing-Taylor*)

Top tens are an excruciating task. I have no formal background in film, so it's in the past decade that I have seen most of the documentaries of my life, and in no apparent chronology or thematic arrangement. I chose these films because they have remained with me, constantly reappearing in my thoughts and inspiring different ways of making sense of the world. When I watched them, something clicked that allowed me to perceive new potential for cinematic expression and for the use of film language.

I have one regret and that is not having more access to 'Eastern' productions. I feel that top ten lists are always significantly tilted towards the West — or the 'global north-west' to be more specific. Achieving that access will become my own personal mission during my next plunge into documentary. While I prepare to do so, I remain truly grateful to be able to participate in this celebration of sight, sound and nonfiction.

PHILIP FRENCH

Former film critic, the *Observer*, UK

Night and Fog (*Resnais*)
Man with a Movie Camera (*Vertov*)
Nostalgia for the Light (*Guzmán*)
Listen to Britain (*Jennings & McAllister*)
Calcutta (*Malle*)
Shoah (*Lanzmann*)
Night Mail (*Watt & Wright*)
Chronicle of a Summer (*Rouch & Morin*)
The Fog of War: Eleven Lessons from the Life of Robert S. McNamara (*Morris*)
The Quince Tree Sun (*Erice*)

During my childhood in World War II I came to loathe the short documentaries that occasionally bulked out programmes at the suburban cinemas I frequented, though I enjoyed such feature-length wartime documentaries as *Desert Victory* (1943). In the post-war years I yawned through Rank's monthly *This Modern Age*. Not until my teens, when I read Roger Manvell's Penguin

We can date the steady rise of cinematic documentary as a response to the public distrust in government and official accounts

Philip French

Isn't all cinema to some degree about forgery, fiction and fibs and that all too delicate line between representation and the real?

Maria Delgado

paperback *Film* and joined film societies, was I aware of the British documentary tradition and of such oddball films as Vigo's *A Propos de Nice*, Strick's *Muscle Beach* and Franju's *Le Sang des bêtes*.

Things changed in the late 50s with the arrival of the fresh if somewhat patronising Free Cinema in Britain, and in the early 60s with the exhilarating American branch of *cinéma vérité*, and TV documentaries, most notably the BBC series *The Great War* (1964). The major turning point, however, was probably *The Sorrow and the Pity* (1969), because of its length, seriousness and the fact that it was banned from French TV and shown only gingerly by the BBC.

From that point we can date the steady rise of the cinematic documentary as a response to the public distrust in government and official accounts of national and world events brought about by the Vietnam War and Watergate and culminating in 9/11 and the invasion of Iraq.

The year it became impossible to ignore the muckrakers and the revealers of inconvenient truths was 2004 when British critics saw a major documentary every couple of weeks. The new prominence of documentary was recognised by a Cannes jury presided over by Quentin Tarantino, giving the Palme d'Or to Michael Moore's *Fahrenheit 9/11* (the first documentary to win since a deadlocked 1956 jury honoured Jacques Cousteau and Louis Malle for *The Silent World*). The film then took a record $100m.

JEAN-MICHEL FRODON

Critic and former editor, *Cahiers du Cinéma*, France

West of the Tracks (*Wang*)
Shoah (*Lanzmann*)
Man with a Movie Camera (*Vertov*)
Close-up (*Kiarostami*)
Night and Fog (*Resnais*)
La via del petrolio (*Bertolucci*)
History of Post-war Japan as Told by a Bar Hostess (*Imamura*)
At Berkeley (*Wiseman*)
Route One/USA (*Kramer*)
I Wish I Knew (*Jia*)

Here I have space to regret not mentioning any Lumière films, or *Man of Aran*, or *La Bête lumineuse*, or *Les Hommes de la baleine*, or any Jean Rouch, preferring to choose mostly contemporary or recent films – but Vertov... Well, yes, still Vertov. I'd also like to make mention of Chris Marker's *A Grin Without a Cat*, one of the most important films ever made, but an essay film rather than a documentary.

ROGER GARCIA

Executive director, Hong Kong International Film Festival, Hong Kong

West of the Tracks (*Wang*)
Letter from Siberia (*Marker*)
Man with a Movie Camera (*Vertov*)
Chronicle of a Summer (*Rouch & Morin*)
Phantom India (*Malle*)
Woodstock: 3 Days of Peace & Music (*Wadleigh*)
Dont Look Back (*Pennebaker*)
Arthur Penn Films 'Little Big Man' (*Erwitt*)
A Propos de Nice (*Vigo & Kaufman*)
The Power of Nightmares (*Curtis*)

'Greatest' is an elastic term depending on the times and circumstances. Perhaps a more suitable term is 'impact', whether on the form or an individual. My preference in documentary is for the essay or diary form, whether observational or constructed – hence Malle, Marker, Rouch, Vertov, Wang Bing, among others.

What interests me most in the documentary is the filmmaker's discovery of self through engagement with the subject. It is a *mise en scène* that places the documentary together with, not apart from, fiction filmmaking. Documentary gained currency on a wider level when it discovered rock 'n' roll, and I have chosen two of the 'greatest' that were made possible by new technologies (lightweight cameras) and social attitudes at the time. Today they seem almost mythical. Cocteau's dictum, "The cinema films death at work," has never seemed truer than when applied to *Woodstock*.

Finally, I love films about movies – there are thousands but the one that turned me on to the form was Elliott Erwitt's half-hour portrait of Arthur Penn during the shooting of *Little Big Man*. After watching it, you want to go out and make movies. If the purpose of documentary is to engage the audience with the world – whatever that world may be – then Erwitt certainly succeeded with me!

THIERRY GARREL

Former head of documentary film, La Sept and ARTE France, France

Shoah (*Lanzmann*)
Nanook of the North (*Flaherty*)
Man with a Movie Camera (*Vertov*)
Near Death (*Wiseman*)
Confession (*Sokurov*)
Black Harvest (*Connolly & Anderson*)
Wittstock tetralogy (*Koepp*)
The Way South (*van der Keuken*)
Die Erschiessung des Landesverräters Ernst S. (*Dindo*)
Reminiscences of a Journey to Lithuania (*Mekas*)

"Prose has walked by foot for too long and it seems to me that the time has finally come for poetry to get off the horse to let prose mount in its place," wrote Lichtenberg more than two centuries ago. And Lukács seemed to respond, not without pessimism: "The form of the essay has not yet today found the path of independence that his sister, poetry, has walked for a long time: the path of the development from the primitive and undifferentiated unity with science, ethics and art."

I can't help but think of the path the documentary has travelled through the past two decades; previously only a minor genre, peripheral and ancillary. It's been a path towards aesthetic autonomy in its languages and at the same time a centrality in today's society.

Born as documentary, cinema throughout the 20th century has been monopolised by fiction, its narratives, its imaginary universes, often formatted in story factories that make our images and our legends in an industrial way. TV shows and the heavy media industries developed in a parallel fashion. It seems to me, however, that with the 21st century, cinema is in the process of rediscovering its original horizon and its primitive magic: the exchange and the sharing of experiences between humans through images. Taking up in a way where literature left off – this "axe to break the frozen ocean inside us" as Kafka described it – documentaries have thus become the humanities of our time.

Cinema is in the process of rediscovering its original horizon and its primitive magic: the sharing of experiences between humans through images

Thierry Garrel

CINTIA GIL

Festival director, Doclisboa, Portugal

La terra trema (*Visconti*)
Man with a Movie Camera (*Vertov*)
A Moment of Innocence (*Makhmalbaf*)
Que farei eu com esta espada? (*Monteiro*)
D'est (*Akerman*)
Histoire(s) du cinéma (*Godard*)
Jaime (*Reis*)
Pered sudom istorii (*Ermler*)
Night and Fog (*Resnais*)
Voyage in Time (*Guerra & Tarkovsky*)

This is obviously a very personal list. Some of these films come from a time when I did not think about cinema with such an abstract and (maybe) overly ideologised separation between different approaches and relations to reality. I learned to love them for the way they signposted some of the issues, questions, postures and images that would become crucial for my life. They were not documentaries, because I did not know exactly what such a thing might be.

I still have a lot of difficulty in grasping in a systematic way what documentary is. I think it defines not so much a form or a process, but a relation between the person watching it and the person making it. It is a sharp and sensitive connection between cinema and reality, where reality becomes a source and a subject for the imagination – but isn't all cinema like that? It sounds basic, too simple maybe, but I prefer such simple definitions that in the end leave enough space to actually see films. Opinions can come afterwords. There are too many opinions in the world, arising every minute.

Documentary is, perhaps, the testimony of a common ground of experience between actual facts, intuition, sensual existence and imagination. It has the power to reveal our history in a way in which nothing has any sense outside individual and collective experience. The dense fragility associated with this capacity is, for me, what links all the films I chose.

DEIRDRE HAJ

Executive director, Full Frame Documentary Film Festival, USA

Harlan County U.S.A. (*Kopple*)
The War Room (*Pennebaker & Hegedus*)
Stop Making Sense (*Demme*)
The Devil Came on Horseback (*Stern & Sundberg*)
The Thin Blue Line (*Morris*)
The Last Waltz (*Scorsese*)
Dont Look Back (*Pennebaker*)
Bowling for Columbine (*Moore*)
Control Room (*Noujaim*)
The Oath (*Poitras*)

This is not a fair list; there are far too many documentaries to list here for differing reasons. It presumes that documentary films all come in one form, and they do not. Also, short-form docs, which too often are overlooked, are not included in my list.

Making use of scarcity is a talent; being present for the accidental moment is a talent too. D.A. Pennebaker does this often. But courage is also an element

Deirdre Haj

That said, I believe that films that incorporate all the elements of great filmmaking in one stand out as the greater films. In other words, the cinematography in *The Devil Came on Horseback* is as good as its storytelling. So too the poetry, if you will, in Kopple's *Harlan County U.S.A.*, of images of coal coming out of a mine as the men go in, tells the story visually as well as her subjects do. Great filmmakers find those images. R.J. Cutler, one of the producers on *The War Room*, says that the amazing last shot of the film happened because they "ran out of film".

Making use of scarcity is also a talent; being present for the accidental moment is a talent, too. Pennebaker does this often. But I must include courage here as an element too: the films of both Poitras and Noujaim are brave and restrained, so courage in their method of storytelling is equal to their ability to capture their footage, resulting in far more damning pieces than any advocacy-laced diatribe could produce. Still I had to include Michael Moore here, because as sprawling as *Bowling for Columbine* is, he draws together many truths in one tight knot.

Perhaps these are not the greatest films, but they are some of my favourites. I favour *vérité*; this is clear in my choices. I wish I had less music on the list... so be it.

PIERS HANDLING

Director, Toronto International Film Festival, Canada

Triumph of the Will (*Riefenstahl*)
Shoah (*Lanzmann*)
Nanook of the North (*Flaherty*)
Man with a Movie Camera (*Vertov*)
Sans soleil (*Marker*)
The Moontrap (*Perrault & Brault*)
Nostalgia for the Light (*Guzmán*)
Hôtel des invalides (*Franju*)
Night and Fog (*Resnais*)
Night Mail (*Watt & Wright*)

The distinction between documentary and fiction has often seemed a specious one to me, as so many of my favourite dramatic films – by Rossellini, Godard, Antonioni, Renoir – are also astounding documents in their own ways. But remove the professional actor from the equation and the live witness or social actor who acts as subject provides the documentary form with a different kind of veracity, demands a different response, and creates a different sense of awe and wonder.

Reality is the stuff of the world I prefer to see in my cinema, whether dramatic or fact-based, and a number of my choices take their inspiration from historical events (the Russian Revolution, Hitler, the Holocaust, World War I, Chile and Allende). These films reveal different truths from those of their fictional counterparts, no more, no less. They explore different aspects of the human story.

There is a more general sense of seriousness in the documentary, and less of an inclination to entertain, although rapt engagement is common to

BFI NATIONAL ARCHIVE (1)/PHOTOFEST NYC (1)

6

CHRONICLE OF A SUMMER

JEAN ROUCH AND EDGAR MORIN, 1961

Chronicle of a Summer still feels like a letter from a better future for documentary filmmaking. As if to forecast, and pre-empt, the decades-long war to define the precepts of ethnographic nonfiction, it procedurally does away with dead-end questions of verity, construct and reality, and demonstrates plainly ways to approach equanimity with 'subjects'. Jean Rouch and Edgar Morin are the architects of a social collaboration and are rigorously open-handed with the materials they're using. Their loose vox-pop style, beginning each encounter by asking whether the interviewee is happy, disarmingly mixes with scenes that show how cinema, in any regard, must be artificial – employing classic shot-reverse-shot techniques in otherwise uneventful conversational moments.

At the same time, Rouch and Morin remind us of a past when almost no one was camera-ready, when the idea of being part of the media, let alone engineering it, was foreign, and when the question of truth in performance was nascent. It doesn't find innocence, exactly – the conversations are often extremely loaded – but rather a candour, an openness, that cannot be replaced now that we all continually see ourselves represented on all manner of screens, and can't help but act with these images in mind. And no, of course we're not happy.

Rachael Rakes

5

THE THIN BLUE LINE

ERROL MORRIS, 1988

A good prosecutor can put a guilty suspect behind bars, we hear in *The Thin Blue Line*, but it takes a great one to convict an innocent man. Something similar might be said of Errol Morris's brilliantly unstable, highly influential investigation into the 1976 roadside shooting of a Texas cop and the wrongful conviction of one Randall Adams. Demonstrating a miscarriage of justice is impressive, but it's quite another thing to undermine the very notion of a stable truth.

The array of interviews with key players makes it clear a raw deal went down. Yet the filmmaker also includes the contradictions, the backtracking, the oddball asides. Most perversely, he creates a confounding palimpsest of deadpan re-enactments that flirt with the absurd (and find their echo in the iterative Philip Glass score). Intense close-ups – of sirens, of hurled milkshakes – evoke mystery, or myopia, in the search for meaning.

The Academy Awards documentary committee infamously failed to nominate the film, reportedly ending their preview before the climactic acknowledgment of guilt. But *The Thin Blue Line* would not be the last of Morris's many voyages into the unknown (and the unknown known).

Nicolas Rapold

both when done well. Great documentaries reorganise their worlds as successfully as the best dramatic films, are as subtle in their visual choices, and as imaginatively assembled and edited as the most sophisticated fictions. And some of the really great ones only use the real as a departure point for the personal.

CRAIG HIGHT

Associate professor, screen and media studies programme, University of Waikato, New Zealand

Man with a Movie Camera (*Vertov*)
The Up series (*Apted & Almond*)
Grizzly Man (*Herzog*)
The War Game (*Watkins*)
Capturing the Friedmans (*Jarecki*)
Grey Gardens (*Maysles brothers, Hovde & Meyer*)
Stories We Tell (*Polley*)
The Thin Blue Line (*Morris*)
Hoop Dreams (*James*)
Shoah (*Lanzmann*)

Documentary is an artform continually underestimated and neglected within popular accounts of media production. These ten films cover some of the subtlety and complexity that is possible in the genre. There is a bias here toward film, and to a lesser extent television, because this remains the medium that consistently provides documentary exemplars.

This list is consequently also a rebuttal to rhetoric that celebrates shorter, small-screen mobile and collaborative forms of capturing and representing reality – these may have a larger distribution and higher profile, and may on occasion help to generate more significant evidence of social and political progress (which is basic to the documentary agenda).

But film still remains at the centre of the documentary's artistic achievements over the past century. Perhaps in another decade some of these might be replaced, especially by online, interactive forms of the genre, but filmmakers in this medium are still developing their craft.

J. HOBERMAN

Critic, USA

The Act of Seeing with One's Own Eyes (*Brakhage*)
Le Sang des bêtes (*Franju*)
In the Street (*Meyers, Levitt, Loeb & Agee*)
Land Without Bread (*Buñuel*)
Man with a Movie Camera (*Vertov*)
Meet Marlon Brando (*Maysles brothers*)
Moi, un noir (*Rouch*)
Olympia (*Riefenstahl*)
Poor Little Rich Girl (*Warhol*)
Shoah (*Lanzmann*)

These are pedagogical choices, which is to say that they are good films to teach or that raise interesting questions. Most (but not all) are also movies that I love or think great.

PAMELA HUTCHINSON

Critic, silentlondon.co.uk, UK

Workers Leaving the Lumière Factory (*Lumière*)
The Battle of the Somme (*Urban & Malins*)
Nanook of the North (*Flaherty*)
Mitchell and Kenyon archive (*Mitchell & Kenyon*)
A Propos de Nice (*Vigo & Kaufman*)
Häxan (*Christensen*)
Man with a Movie Camera (*Vertov*)
Berlin: Symphony of a City (*Ruttmann*)
Drifters (*Grierson*)
Down the Hudson (*Armitage*)

Although the term 'documentary' didn't appear until the last light of the silent era, I feel fully justified in indulging myself here. From actualities through to dramatic reconstructions and ethnographic romances, via city symphonies and the avant garde, the first three decades and change of cinema history were a golden age for factual filmmaking.

KENT JONES

Writer, filmmaker and director, New York Film Festival, USA

Shoah (*Lanzmann*)
The Lost World (*de Seta*)
Belfast, Maine (*Wiseman*)
The Sorrow and the Pity (*Ophüls*)
Eyes on the Prize: America's Civil Rights Years, 1954-1965 (*Hampton*)
Italianamerican (*Scorsese*)
Huie's Sermon (*Herzog*)
Fires Were Started (*Jennings*)
Jammin' the Blues (*Mili*)
Night and Fog (*Resnais*)

I chose ten films that came to mind. They are surrounded by the great community of documentary: Flaherty, Maysles, Pennebaker, Leacock, Drew, Rouch, Dvortsevoy, Solanas, Camerini and Robertson, Kopple, Marker, Guzmán, Grierson, Storck, van der Keuken, Ivens, Hurwitz, Leyda, Stoney, Brault, Mettler, Wilkerson, Gianvito, Morris, Burns (Ken and Ric), and others. Many of these people made films that could just as well have gone on my list.

CHUCK KLEINHANS

Co-editor, JUMP CUT; professor emeritus, department of radio, film and television, Northwestern University, USA

October (*Eisenstein*)
Enthusiasm (*Vertov*)
Culloden (*Watkins*)
Castro Street (*Baillie*)
Fuses (*Schneemann*)
79 primaveras (*Alvarez*)
Land Without Bread (*Buñuel*)
Last Train Home (*Fan*)
Weather Diaries (*Kuchar*)
Blowjob (*Warhol*)

The Griersonian definition and tradition of social documentary has been a straitjacket for understanding documentary media. In the past 25 years new voices have challenged the conventional thinking and new artists have presented imaginative alternatives. Critics expanded the field of nonfiction motion media. Audio documentary has moved farther and faster. Time for visual documentary to catch up.

Documentary is at an impasse. It can continue to present itself as an arbiter of truth-telling, or it can think about how reality is felt rather than understood

Jim Kolmar

JIM KOLMAR

Film programmer, digital content, SXSW, USA/UK

The Up series (*Apted & Almond*)
The Story of Film: An Odyssey (*Cousins*)
The Sound of Insects: Record of a Mummy (*Liechti*)
Werner Herzog Eats His Shoe (*Blank*)
Araya (*Benacerraff*)
On the Bowery (*Rogosin*)
Le Sang des bêtes (*Franju*)
A Man Vanishes (*Imamura*)
Alamar (*González-Rubio*)
¡Vivan las Antípodas! (*Kossakovsky*)

In no particular order (the greatest challenge!).

In some ways this was an easy task – it struck me as I considered the options how few documentaries retain their resonance and poetry (and the best of them are poetic) across time. My choices reflect the idea of cinema as a vehicle for articulating experiences on screen, which aren't always the same as reality. Life as surrealism or deception or dream.

I also notice that many of my selections are films as concerned with their own making as they are the stories and worlds they reveal. They're inquisitive, restless. We're so concerned with finding new ways of telling stories, new paradigms, but it seems even more apparent – and that's the value of such lists – that we're barely scratching the surface as it is.

It also occurs to me again that 'documentary' is increasingly vague and spurious nomenclature. A film like *Alamar*, unconcerned with easy categorisation, doesn't need to define itself – it feels like truth, regardless. *Le Sang des bêtes* is a simple *verité* portrait, but ascends to poetry, almost belonging to the so-called 'experimental' tradition.

Documentary is at an impasse. It can continue to present itself as an arbiter of conventional truth and fact-telling, and sometimes even appears to achieve this lofty goal; or, it can dig deeper, look beyond convention and think about how truth and reality is felt rather than understood. I don't want to be told what reality is, but I do want to feel it, and I want to see how others feel it. For me, these films succeed because they avoid didacticism, and approach truth as sensitively and warily as they avoid pinning down precisely what it is. There's still mystery out there.

ALISA LEBOW

Reader in film studies, University of Sussex, UK

S21: The Khmer Rouge Killing Machine (*Panh*)
Nostalgia for the Light (*Guzmán*)
Spiritual Voices (*Sokurov*)
The Thin Blue Line (*Morris*)
Man with a Movie Camera (*Vertov*)
Images of the World and the Inscription of War (*Farocki*)
D'est (*Akerman*)
Zelig (*Allen*)
Salesman (*Maysles brothers & Zwerin*)
Our Daily Bread (*Geyrhalter*)

It is a frustrating and nearly impossible task to choose the ten best documentaries of all time. One doesn't want to reiterate the canon endlessly, yet some are clearly unavoidable. One also realises how few documentaries outside of the Western purview are accessible and known in the English-speaking world, even to scholars in the field. What counts as documentary is at issue as well (do we include art installations, fake documentaries, diary films?), though I tried to be expansive here as well. One's own proclivities clearly come in to play, but I tried to maintain a gold standard where the films I included all had to be innovative in form and in some way challenging in content.

DAW-MING LEE

Director, department of filmmaking, Taipei National University of the Arts, Taiwan

Berlin: Symphony of a City (*Ruttmann*)
The Fall of the Romanov Dynasty (*Shub*)
Man with a Movie Camera (*Vertov*)
Night and Fog (*Resnais*)
The Hunters (*Gardner & Marshall*)
Chronicle of a Summer (*Rouch & Morin*)
Crisis: Behind a Presidential Commitment (*Drew*)
You Are on Indian Land (*Ransen*)
The Sorrow and the Pity (*Ophüls*)
Bowling for Columbine (*Moore*)

Documentaries, as a form of filmmaking, are unique because they involve us in the lives of real people, without whose voluntary or involuntary participation no film can be made. It is the lives and decisions of these people, and sometimes the lives and decisions of the filmmakers, that an audience sees, allowing them to reflect upon their own lives and opinions. Thus, documentary involves the subject, the filmmaker and the audience, all of whom look/gaze at one another and search for meanings.

KEVIN B. LEE

Critic, USA

Afrique 50 (*Vautier*)
The Gleaners and I (*Varda*)
Handsworth Songs (*Akomfrah*)
Hoop Dreams (*James*)
The Hour of the Furnaces (*Getino & Solanas*)
The House Is Black (*Farokhzad*)
Zum vergleich (*Farocki*)
Los Angeles Plays Itself (*Andersen*)
Jiao Dai (*Li*)
Toute la mémoire du monde (*Resnais*)

My ballot intentionally excludes documentaries that placed prominently in *Sight & Sound*'s 2012 'Greatest films of all time' poll: *Man with a Movie Camera*, *Shoah*, *Close-Up*, *Histoire(s) du cinéma*, *Sans soleil*. I recognise the power of these lists such that I feel that power needs to be distributed beyond the canonical titles, even within a genre as under-appreciated as documentary cinema.

And yet, after toiling at the margins of cinema for the past century and now enjoying near ubiquity in mainstream media, documentary as a form appears on the brink of dissolution. Every attempt at characterising that recognisable sense of reality that defines its function yields an underlying fiction. As '*verité*', 'direct' and 'observational' cinemas have ossified into formulas, they reveal themselves as yet more costumes to dress reality in ways that suit us, while other realities stay naked and unnoticed.

I chose these ten films because they did the most to strip me of my conventions in regarding documentary, to help me contend with its myth of the real, one ever in need of disruption, ever requiring new eyes not just to see it, but to see beyond it.

DENNIS LIM

Director of programming, Film Society of Lincoln Center, New York, USA

Man with a Movie Camera (*Vertov*)

As 'verité', 'direct' and 'observational' cinemas have ossified into formulas, they reveal themselves as yet more costumes to dress reality in ways that suit us

Kevin B. Lee

BFI NATIONAL ARCHIVE (2)

4 NIGHT AND FOG

ALAIN RESNAIS, 1955

In 1945 moviegoers worldwide became familiar through weekly newsreels in their local cinemas with the unspeakable conditions in the recently liberated Nazi extermination camps. Immediately there followed documentary assemblages of this material (most notably for screening as evidence at the Nuremberg war crime trials). Not, however, until *Night and Fog* (*Nuit et brouillard*), commissioned to mark the tenth anniversary of the Allied liberation of the most notorious camp, at Auschwitz, did film producers truly confront and define the moral and aesthetic parameters involved in treating such an intractable subject.

Everyone involved in making the film was a modernist, associated with the international avant garde (most famously at the time the composer Hanns Eisler, an Austrian former pupil of Schoenberg who had spent the Nazi era in exile). But the director, Alain Resnais, refused to take part until it was settled that the script should be written by the poet and editor Jean Cayrol, himself a survivor of the camps. They chose to act with the utmost restraint, questioning the nature of film itself and finding a direct, transparent, understated style for the images, the commentary and the unassertive music.

Resnais considered the film more a meditation than a documentary, and the movie unfolds chronologically. It begins in 1933 with the coming of the Third Reich, continues through the covert building of the camps, the transportation of the prisoners, the creation of the hellish death culture of gas chambers and crematoria, and concludes with the liberation in 1945 and the question of how the memory of the horrors should be preserved and mediated. The past is archive footage in grainy black and white, filmed by SS guards and Allied liberators. The ruined buildings, rusty barbed-wire fences and verdant surroundings of Auschwitz in 1955 are rendered in almost seductive colour. We are compelled to participate in making sense of an experience reduced here to its ineffable, existential essence.

Night and Fog (a translation of 'Nacht und Nebel', the obfuscatory Nazi term for the political smokescreen under which the system operated) ran into trouble in 1955 with both German authorities and the collaborationist French police, while the Israelis thought insufficient attention was paid to Jews as Holocaust victims. Five years passed before its British release, with an X Certificate. But it was soon established and remains as a touchstone, the greatest, most crystalline film on the subject, the one every filmmaker must come to terms with before amplifying on this most challenging of topics.

Philip French

3 SANS SOLEIL

CHRIS MARKER, 1982

"By the way, did you know that there are emus in the Ile de France?" This is surely not the most pertinent question in Chris Marker's monumental *Sans soleil* – a time-and-space-hopping travelogue that may be one of the most ardently searching movies ever made – but it perfectly encapsulates the film's M.O.: the sly, conspiratorial tone that collapses the literal and figurative distance between the images on the screen and the epigrams on the soundtrack, and the viewer doing his or her level best to keep up with the racing pace of both. Allusions to Jean-Jacques Rousseau, the Khmer Rouge and the revolutionary history of Guinea-Bissau are heady stuff, but who can resist a glancing close-up of a puffed-up bird bobbing its way through a botanical garden?

Rigour and discursiveness – or perhaps a uniquely discursive rigour – are the most potent weapons in *Sans soleil*'s arsenal. Shot by Marker under the pseudonym Sandor Krasna and narrated (in both its English and French-language versions) by an actress pretending to be this cipher's closest correspondent – and thus a vessel for conveying both his footage and his thoughts to the audience – the film is unique in the documentary canon for its simultaneous embodiment of both documentary's most classical and radical qualities.

At its core, the work is an exercise in ethnographic filmmaking, with Marker-as-Krasna decamping to locations in Japan and Africa to observe the environments and rituals therein. But the highly mediated presentation – the adoption of a fictional framework and the relentless manipulation and juxtaposition of the images into a kind of audiovisual labyrinth – gets so far away from Flaherty that it actually laps him: depending on one's perspective, *Sans soleil* is either an *hommage* to the observational ethos of *Nanook of the North* or an ardent repudiation.

It's a cliché to say that about a movie – that its true shape or texture is in the eye of the beholder – but it's true of *Sans soleil*, which not only withstands multiple viewings, but never seems to be the same film twice. It addresses memory even as its different threads seem to forget themselves; it parses geopolitics without betraying any affiliation; it might be Marker's most elaborately self-effacing film, or his most plangently personal. It's quite telling that the emu that shows up seemingly apropos of nothing near the start returns at the end, and that even though he's barely recognisable through the video-artefacted veil of Japanese artist Hayao Yamaneko's electronic imagery – a visual space that the narration refers to as "the zone" – he feels like some long-lost old friend. An emu in the Ile de France is a rare bird, and so is *Sans soleil*.

Adam Nayman

Le Sang des bêtes (*Franju*)
Chronicle of a Summer (*Rouch & Morin*)
The House Is Black (*Farokhzad*)
La Région centrale (*Snow*)
Jaime (*Reis*)
Anna (*Grifi & Sarchielli*)
Sans soleil (*Marker*)
RR (*Benning*)
The Autobiography of Nicolae Ceausescu (*Ujica*)

CARLOS LOSILLA

Critic; professor of film theory, Pompeu Fabra University, Barcelona, Spain

Sans soleil (*Marker*)
Moi, un noir (*Rouch*)
Five (*Kiarostami*)
Train of Shadows: The Spectre of Le Thuit (*Guerín*)
Reminiscences of a Journey to Lithuania (*Mekas*)
The Last Waltz (*Scorsese*)
La Soufrière: Waiting for an Inevitable Disaster (*Herzog*)
Germany in Autumn (*Fassbinder, Reitz, Schlöndorff et al*)
Tabu: A Story of the South Seas (*Murnau*)
Ici et ailleurs (*Godard & Miéville*)

Five remarks about (the myth of) documentary:

1. I don't believe in documentary as a reminiscence of the real, but as a reconstruction of a given reality. Shot, frame, human figures or landscapes are the result of a choice, and this choice may be the beginning of fiction. The documentary, then, is like the other side of fiction, the side in which reality seems more real but shows too its irreality.

2. I like documentaries in which filmmakers are committed to an unmasking of the real.

3. Is every film a documentary of its shooting? I don't think so; it's a documentary of bodies, faces, gesturality, costumes, but reworked with the camera, the actors facing this camera, etc.

4. Every documentary is a work of fiction (it is told in a way in which reality makes a story) and every work of fiction is a documentary (it shows the way in which the story lets us see its reality).

5. Every documentary reveals the absence of the whole reality that remains outside of the frame, and this absence is the most important thing because it means that the real in its entirety doesn't want to be present in the image. The documentary, then, as an evocation of the reality as a myth. The documentary as a myth.

PETER MATTHEWS

Critic and academic, UK

Nanook of the North (*Flaherty*)
Dying at Grace (*King*)
Homework (*Kiarostami*)
The Emperor's Naked Army Marches On (*Hara*)
Toute la mémoire du monde (*Resnais*)
High School (*Wiseman*)
Into Great Silence (*Gröning*)
Listen to Britain (*Jennings & McAllister*)
The Battle of San Pietro (*Huston*)
Portrait of Jason (*Clarke*)

André Bazin understood that reality in cinema is more a spiritual attitude than an achievable goal. Only the very naive suppose that documentary presents an unmediated window on the world. Beginning with Robert Flaherty (or for that matter the Lumières), filmmakers have artfully staged the events they purported to show. Our contemporary media savvy reveals fly-on-the-wall objectivity to be a delusion – pressurised by the camera, people will always act out ersatz versions of themselves. And we know full well that 'spontaneous', 'uncontrolled' cinema regains power over the image in the editing suite. For all that, documentary persists as an idea. We obtain from it an experience of authenticity (however paradoxical and questionable) that even the most truthful fiction films deny us.

The documentaries I've chosen aren't necessarily 'the greatest', but each keeps faith with reality, as Bazin would say. In every case, form provides the rigorous discipline by which the mysteries of human behaviour are illuminated.

SOPHIE MAYER

Critic and academic, UK

Land Without Bread (*Buñuel*)
Night Mail (*Watt & Wright*)
A Portrait of Ga (*Tait*)
Statues Also Die (*Marker, Resnais & Cloquet*)
The House Is Black (*Farokhzad*)
Harlan County U.S.A. (*Kopple*)
Daughter Rite (*Citron*)
Divorce Iranian Style (*Longinotto & Mir-Hosseini*)
The Gleaners and I (*Varda*)
Qallunaat! Why White People Are Funny (*Sandiford*)

To paraphrase Bill Nichols, documentary began as a conversation in which I talk to you about them. Yet, since its inception, filmmakers have contested this, attempting to find ways in which the camera and those behind it can speak in empathy and alliance with those in front of it, and to question the observer effect for subjects and audiences by questioning documentary's conventions. Originally a tool of power, allied to anthropology, documentary has been transformed by its practitioners into a method of speaking truth to power, by making visible the unseen and audible the unheard.

On different scales, from the intimate to the imperial, these documentaries do just that, contesting every way in which conventional documentary inscribes its authenticity from the 'voice of God' via the judiciary to the colonial archives. Employing poetry, song, dance, sculpture, painting and reverie, these films use performance and imagination to push at the limits of documentary, at once a carnivalesque overturning of claims to authority and the establishment of new forms of testimony.

Varda's *The Gleaners and I* and Sandiford's *Qallunaat* are paradigmatic of the movement towards auto-ethnography, using the camera in one hand to document the other. Aligned with the power of community, discovering forms for speaking in solidarity, the films use newly accessible digital tools in different ways to explore the previously unseen.

While Varda fossicks equally in the fields and galleries of France, Sandiford digs in to the documentary archive itself, audaciously reframing the early documentaries commissioned by Canada's National Film Board, government propaganda against the Inuit and First Nations. With wit, clarity and concision, *Qallunaat* is part of a wave of new meta-documentaries (*How to Survive a Plague, The Nine Muses, Stories We Tell*) talking to us about how we have been perceived, and how we can change that.

NOE MENDELLE

Director, Scottish Documentary Institute, UK

Tarachime (*Kawase*)
Nobody's Business (*Berliner*)
The Gleaners and I (*Varda*)
Belovy (*Kossakovsky*)
Etre et avoir (*Philibert*)
The 3 Rooms of Melancholia (*Honkasalo*)
The White Diamond (*Herzog*)
I Am Breathing (*Davie & McKinnon*)
Bread Day (*Dvortsevoy*)
How Is Your Fish Today? (*Guo*)

The films here remembered are the ones that have a poetical magic that plants an emotional seed inside me that grows on every viewing and in between. It connects emotions to ideas through the sheer quality of images. They create meaning for a world in chaos. Documentaries have the power to be innovative and enigmatic and yet celebrate detailed aspects of our lives.

MADS MIKKELSEN

CPH:DOX, Denmark

The Chelsea Girls (*Warhol & Morrissey*)
10 (*Kiarostami*)
Afrique 50 (*Vautier*)
Out 1 (*Rivette & Schiffman*)
Sans soleil (*Marker*)
Anna (*Grifi & Sarchielli*)
Our Nazi (*Kramer*)
Unsere Afrikareise (*Kubelka*)
In Vanda's Room (*Costa*)
Of Great Events and Ordinary People (*Ruiz*)

All revolutions have a beginning, a middle and an end – but not necessarily in that order. If the 'return of the real' has been vital to cinema for the past decade or so, and if the field between nonfiction and other artistic forms keeps contemporary cinema urgent and exciting, perhaps it's because modern filmmakers have simply continued to realise the potential that the best minds have seen in the medium since forever – oftentimes below (or above) the radar of the culture industry, if not in direct opposition to it. Although it has its established classics, the history of documentary film is obviously much less canonised than that of the feature film. (Will *F for Fake* be the *Citizen Kane* of the new *S&S* documentary poll? Will *Shoah*?) And for someone who has never been much of a listmaker, this is one of the rare cases where a top ten makes sense: as an occasion to suggest a parallel history of ideal films. In no particular new world order, these are ten films that point the way to new beginnings.

Reality in cinema is more a spiritual attitude than an achievable goal. Only the naive suppose documentary presents an unmediated window on the world

Peter Matthews

GILBERTO PEREZ

Author, professor of film studies, USA/Cuba

Boat Leaving the Port (*Lumière*)
Nanook of the North (*Flaherty*)
Man with a Movie Camera (*Vertov*)
Land Without Bread (*Buñuel*)
Listen to Britain (*Jennings & McAllister*)
The Sorrow and the Pity (*Ophüls*)
Fata Morgana (*Herzog*)
Welfare (*Wiseman*)
Homework (*Kiarostami*)
Useless (*Jia*)

My choices are in chronological order. The line between documentary and fiction is not easy to draw, and some films notably straddle it. Documentary, as Dai Vaughan maintained, is in the eye of the beholder, "not a style or a method or a genre... but a mode of response" to the photographic image: "The documentary response is one in which the image is perceived as signifying what it appears to record."

MICHAEL RENOV

Professor of critical studies, School of Cinematic Arts, University of Southern California, USA

Man with a Movie Camera (*Vertov*)
Listen to Britain (*Jennings & McAllister*)
The Wonder Ring (*Brakhage*)
Chronicle of a Summer (*Rouch & Morin*)
The Up series (*Apted & Almond*)
Now (*Alvarez*)
Shoah (*Lanzmann*)
Tongues Untied (*Riggs*)
The Gleaners and I (*Varda*)
Waltz with Bashir (*Folman*)

After more than three decades of teaching, I've arrived at a special appreciation of a certain (until now inchoate) canon of films that combine historical significance, aesthetic innovation and political cogency. I am especially pleased when an essential work is succinct. Two of the films on my list are six minutes in length. Another, however, runs for nine-and-a-half hours.

I'm hoping through my choices to signal some of the formal and ideological shifts apparent over time from the city symphony cycle of the 1920s (*Man with a Movie Camera* thus stands in for Franken and Ivens's *Rain*, Vigo and Kaufman's *A propos de Nice* and others) to the birth of *cinéma vérité* in 1960 (*Chronicle of a Summer*), the emergence of a strand of first-person filmmaking foregrounding race, gender and sexuality (*Tongues Untied*) and the arrival of the animated documentary (*Waltz with Bashir*). The inclusion of a Stan Brakhage film is meant to suggest that nonfiction can also be visionary.

The sweep of decades is important for my list – nearly 80 years separate Vertov and Folman – as is its global character. I wonder if my list would have been substantially different 20 years ago or a decade hence. I can't be sure, but I'm doubtful.

Originally a tool of power, documentary has been transformed into a method of speaking truth to power, by making visible the unseen and audible the unheard

Sophie Mayer

JONATHAN ROSENBAUM

Critic, USA

Shoah (*Lanzmann*)
Statues Also Die (*Marker, Resnais & Cloquet*)
The House Is Black (*Farokhzad*)
A Tale of the Wind (*Ivens & Loridan*)

India (*Rossellini*)
Workers, Peasants (*Straub & Huillet*)
Sans soleil (*Marker*)
Mix-up (*Romand*)
RR (*Benning*)
I regret the absence of any silent films (the first of which might be Vertov's *Man with a Movie Camera*), but I also lament having to exclude, among others, Michael Snow's *La Région centrale* (1971), Abbas Kiarostami's *Orderly or Disorderly* (1981), Edgardo Cozarinsky's *La Guerre d'un seul homme* (1982), Robb Moss's *The Same River Twice* (2003), and Adam Curtis's *The Trap: What Happened to Our Dream of Freedom* (2007).

MICHAEL SICINSKI

Critic, *Cinema Scope* magazine, Canada

Night and Fog (*Resnais*)
Man with a Movie Camera (*Vertov*)
Louisiana Story (*Flaherty*)
Disorder (*Huang*)
Titicut Follies (*Wiseman*)
Fast, Cheap & Out of Control (*Morris*)
Zapruder Kennedy Assassination Film (*Zapruder*)
Granton Trawler (*Anstey & Grierson*)
Images of the World and the Inscription of War (*Farocki*)
Histoire(s) du cinéma (*Godard*)
The collapse of the referent, the supposed encroachment of digital images and their faithlessness with regards to truth value, was all we seemed to talk about back in grad school. It all seems so quaint now. However, I wonder if that discussion (a kind of film theorist's version of the Y2K bug) was a necessary prelude to the renaissance in nonfiction filmmaking we're seeing today. Nothing provokes furious activity quite like being told it's all over. Maybe we need to proclaim the death of film once a decade, as a public service.

IAIN SINCLAIR

Writer, UK

Chung Kuo China (*Antonioni*)
The Act of Seeing with One's Own Eyes (*Brakhage*)
Kino Pravda (*Vertov*)
Hôtel des invalides (*Franju*)
Histoire(s) du cinéma (*Godard*)
In the Wake of a Deadad (*Kötting*)
Diaries, Notes & Sketches: Walden (*Mekas*)
An Interview with Dennis Potter (*Poole*)
Empire (*Warhol*)
The boundaries of what passes for 'documentary' are so elastic as to be meaningless: much classic Hollywood product, on consideration, looks like a series of documentaries about actors – Monroe, Mitchum, Brando. I can't conceive of listing or limiting the 'most important' – only today's retrieval of films that are important to me.

FERNANDA SOLORZANO

Critic, Mexico

Hearts of Darkness: A Filmmaker's Apocalypse (*Bahr & Hickenlooper*)
Burden of Dreams (*Blank*)
Sans soleil (*Marker*)
Night and Fog (*Resnais*)
The Fog of War: Eleven Lessons from the Life of Robert S. McNamara (*Morris*)
Bowling for Columbine (*Moore*)
Capturing the Friedmans (*Jarecki*)
The Act of Killing (*Oppenheimer, Cynn & anonymous*)
Senna (*Kapadia*)
The Bridge (*Steele*)
The nature of my chosen documentaries is so diverse that I could hardly draw a conclusion on what is the biggest asset of the genre. That said, I believe the greatest documentaries are those in which the sum of form and content give way to an insight on the nature of filmmaking and our relationship with moving images – both fictional and testimonial. It's a paradox, given the notion of a documentary as a 'window' to a reality out of the viewer's reach. It's evident that they serve that function, but it hardly stops there.

Chris Marker states in *Sans soleil* that it's absurd that in film schools they teach people not to look at the camera. Likewise, it's hard to observe reality as portrayed in a documentary without questioning the role of the camera. The medium is too powerful to be ignored. The beauty of documentaries is that they force us to acknowledge that power.

NECATI SONMEZ

Director, Documentarist – Istanbul Documentary Days, Turkey

Night and Fog (*Resnais*)
I am Cuba (*Kalatozov*)
Pour le mistral (*Ivens*)
The Night It Rained (*Shirdel*)
The Time of Liberation Has Come (*Srour*)
Sans soleil (*Marker*)
The Thin Blue Line (*Morris*)
The Gleaners and I (*Varda*)
Darwin's Nightmare (*Sauper*)
Ten Minutes Older (*Frank*)
I would like to quote from a short story by Eduardo Galeano from his book *Days and Nights of Love and War*. He talks about a talented and well-known sculptor.

"The sculptor works in an enormous workshop, surrounded by children. All the neighbourhood children are his friends. One fine day the mayor's office commissioned him to make a huge horse for the city plaza. A truck brought a gigantic block of granite to the shop.

"The sculptor began to work on it, standing on a ladder, hammering and chiselling away. The children watched him work. Then the children went away to the mountains or the seaside on vacation.

"When they returned, the sculptor showed them the finished horse. And one of the children asked him wide-eyed, 'But... how did you know that inside the stone there was a horse?'"

For me documentary filmmaking is very much like bringing the horses (stories) out of the stones (life) by hammering and chiselling the rough reality. And the legacy of the documentary genre shows that the 'stones' that surround us are full of stranger-than-fiction stories.

MICHAEL STEWART

Founding director, Open City Docs Fest, UK

Shoah (*Lanzmann*)
Chronicle of a Summer (*Rouch & Morin*)
Joe Leahy's Neighbours (*Conolly & Anderson*)
The Women's Olamal: The Organisation of a Maasai Fertility Ceremony (*Llewelyn-Davies*)
Nanook of the North (*Flaherty*)
The Curse of the Hedgehog (*Budrala*)
Listen to Britain (*Jennings & McAllister*)
Cséplö Gyuri (*Schiffer*)
The Up series (*Apted & Almond*)
Model (*Wiseman*)
I suspect that if human civilisation survives 5,000 years, it will be the documentaries made in the first century of cinema – and not the fictions – that will fascinate our descendants, or at least those and the few fictions that aspired to the documentary impulse: the fascination with what it is that is truly happening in front of the camera. Most of our fictions will seem like Egyptian grave paintings: ritualised, clichéd storytelling. Those rare films that seek to capture the fleeting moment in time and frame its dynamic: they will live on. The documentary tradition is full of them.

In our own times documentary is also the unacknowledged chorus of democratic politics – the voice on the side of the stage telling us what we should be attending to even as we ignore its pleas. It is no accident that, as the broadcast behemoths abandon the documentary form, cinemas should be filling with audiences hungry for the unique, contemplative world that documentary brings in to being.

In my top ten I have focused on films of great cinematic merit. An equally crucial role of documentary is the documentation of our times, and authors like Norma Percy (whose *Watergate* series created a whole new way of telling modern history) or Mike Grigsby, whose early social documentaries still make for searing social commentary and dramatic cinematography, cannot pass without mention. Documentary is nothing if it is not engaged – however creative its treatment of the *actualité*.

Dai Vaughan once said that the problems of documentary were the problems of life – the problems of knowing what the hell is really going on. For this reason it is the medium of our times: the medium of what we aspire towards – an open, tolerant, democratic polity.

AMY TAUBIN

Critic, USA

Man with a Movie Camera (*Vertov*)
Shoah (*Lanzmann*)
Little Deaths: An Unfinished Story of Pleasure and Violence (*Sallarès*)
Histoire(s) du cinéma (*Godard*)
Land Without Bread (*Buñuel*)
Diaries, Notes & Sketches: Walden (*Mekas*)
Screen Test (*Warhol*)
Night and Fog (*Resnais*)
Le Joli Mai (*Marker & Lhomme*)
D'est (*Akerman*)
I participated in this absurd endeavour solely to be able to bring attention to Mireia Sallarès's *Little Deaths*. I also wanted to place several works of so-called avant-garde or experimental cinema within the documentary canon. Had I compiled this list three decades ago, films that loomed large then, but which I haven't looked at in years, would have been included, most likely *The Hour of the Furnaces* and *The Battle of Chile*. I also wish I could have made room for Rithy Panh's rigorous *S21: The Khmer Rouge Killing Machine* in order to shed some light, through opposition, on how immoral, exploitative, ahistorical and ignorant is a current critical favourite, *The Act of Killing*.

COLIN YOUNG,

Founder, programme in ethnographic film UCLA, London; founding director, National Film and Television School, Ateliers du Cinéma Européen, UK

Soldier Girls (*Broomfield & Churchill*)
Sisters in Law (*Ayisi & Longinotto*)
The Lie of the Land (*Dineen*)
Wedding Camels (*David & Judith MacDougall*)
Happy Mother's Day, Mrs Fisher (*Leacock & Chopra*)
Celso and Cora (*Kildea*)
Chronicle of a Summer (*Rouch & Morin*)
Naim and Jabar (*Hancock & Di Gioia*)
The Reluctant Revolutionary (*McAllister*)
Dont Look Back (*Pennebaker*)
Storytelling has always included fiction and nonfiction. The cinema gave us, from its beginnings, the poles of Méliès and Lumière, but the big money always followed fiction. Perhaps unsurprisingly, low-budget fiction (Bresson, Ozu, De Sica, Rohmer) often seems closer to nonfiction than do their higher-budget counterparts, which can splash out on special effects and global stars. This leaves the field open for nonfiction authors to learn storytelling through close observation, and to find narratives respecting both subject and audience. The discipline of observational cinema seems to have harnessed all the powers of image and sound that are necessary to open the world to honest enquiry – often, but not exclusively, in the service of social participation, just as often for fun and amusement. John Reith and John Grierson were stern observers of the social scene – each in his way wishing to use the screen to promote social cohesion.

Our documentary contemporaries see no fault in telling stories that compete with the blockbusters in presenting their stories with humour and mischief. We can as easily fall in love with their 'protagonists' as we can with any fictional god or goddess, we can find lessons to live by – ways of life to attempt to emulate – dangers to avoid and signposts to follow. All such are attributes of good fiction, but there is a particular zing about finding them in a documentary that teaches us to take a closer look at the world around us, something a purely didactic film will rarely do. Journalism has it own role to play but this is not the only – or even the best – way to report on or analyse the circumstances of our shared existence. Seeing really can be believing.

The boundaries of the term are so elastic as to be meaningless: much classic Hollywood product looks like documentaries about actors – Monroe, Brando

Iain Sinclair

Documentary is the unacknowledged chorus of democratic politics – the voice telling us what we should be attending to even as we ignore its pleas

Michael Stewart

2 SHOAH
CLAUDE LANZMANN, 1985

There are documentary filmmakers who plant their stakes within existing traditions and those for whom cinema has to be reinvented. Claude Lanzmann clearly belongs in the latter category. Of course cinema already had to exist in order to allow Lanzmann to make *Shoah* – the title is the Hebrew word for catastrophe – but he also had to rethink what cinema could be. His 550-minute examination of the Jewish Holocaust falls within the documentary tradition of investigative journalism, but what he does with that form is so confrontational and relentless that it demands to be described in philosophical/spiritual terms rather than simply cinematically. Determined to make us imagine the unimaginable, Lanzmann literalises a quote from the philosopher Emil Fackenheim: "The European Jews massacred are not just of the past, they are the presence of an absence."

One could even describe *Shoah* as a kind of cruel but determined shotgun marriage between Judaism and existentialism – a match between Lanzmann's sense of his tribal roots (he was born in 1925 to a French Jewish family of Eastern European immigrants, and joined the Resistance at the age of 18) and his adopted intellectual roots (in his 20s he became editor of Jean-Paul Sartre's journal *Les Temps modernes* and the lover of Simone de Beauvoir).

How does one negotiate between a religion founded on the dictates of the past and a philosophy founded on the needs and challenges of the present? First of all, in the case of *Shoah*, by refusing any historical or archival footage or narration. The film depends exclusively on interviews and footage shot in the present, either at certain key places where the Holocaust occurred (on the trains carrying Jews to the death camps, or at what remains of the camps themselves at Chelmno, Sobibor, Treblinka, Auschwitz) or in other relevant locations in Wlodawa, Kolo, Berlin, Belzec, Warsaw – even, most memorably, in an Israeli barbershop. Secondly, by recording Lanzmann and others in their own languages (including German, Hebrew, Polish and Yiddish) and including the translations into French, which are then subtitled in English in Anglo-American prints of the film. And thirdly, as de Beauvoir noted in her preface to the film's published text, by editing the sequences not according to any chronological order, but poetically. "To write poetry after Auschwitz is barbaric," Theodor Adorno once wrote, and Lanzmann's singular achievement is to both challenge and corroborate that statement.

Jonathan Rosenbaum

BFI NATIONAL ARCHIVE (3)

1 MAN WITH A MOVIE CAMERA

DZIGA VERTOV

By Brian Winston

David Abelevich Kaufman is documentary's Jumpin' Jack Flash. Indeed, there is a photograph of him caught in mid-air, jumping. His pseudonym 'Dziga Vertov', which translates as 'spinning top', could not be more apposite. And his masterpiece, *Man with a Movie Camera* (*Chelovek s kinoapparatom*, 1929) is a flash spinning-top of a movie. It has taken more than 80 years, though, for this to be fully recognised.

Man with a Movie Camera is a 'city symphony' film of a kind not uncommon in the 1920s. These films celebrated the vibrancy of the modern cityscape with pastiches of urban images, for the most part neither set up nor reconstructed. Vertov, though, plays fast and loose with the conventions of such films, to profound effect. He superimposes, splits the screen, deploys fast- and slow-motion and extreme close-ups, and animates using stop-motion. Most surprisingly, he shows us the processes whereby a documentary is made. The eponymous man with the movie camera is his brother Mikhail, and his wife, Yelizaveta Svilova, is his editor. Both appear at work on screen.

His experimental exuberance was not appreciated. When the film was seen in the West, it was dismissed. The British documentarist Paul Rotha remembered: "Vertov we regarded really as rather a joke, you know. All this cutting, and one camera photographing another camera photographing another camera – it was all trickery, and we didn't take it seriously." At the time, his colleague John Grierson, the Scottish producer and theorist regarded as the father of British realist documentary, dismissed Vertov's work peremptorily: "Vertov has pushed the argument to a point at which it becomes ridiculous." More profoundly and more dangerously for Vertov, he was also attacked in the Soviet Union. Eisenstein called *Man with a Movie Camera* "cine-hooliganism". The comrade-theoreticians associated with the intellectual *LEF* journal were equally unimpressed: "Dziga Vertov cuts up newsreel. In this sense his work is not artistically progressive" – a failing that could get you years in the Gulag.

Vertov, who always marched to a different drummer, compounded the threat. He never produced recognisable scripts, shot from the hip (most of the time), went over budget and was generally uncontrollable. He was a combative polemicist vehemently insisting that the potential of the cinema as a revolutionary tool was being ignored by his fellows. Their fictions were bourgeois distractions, unlike his efforts with the "unplayed film", as he called documentary.

Almost from the start of his career in newsreels immediately after the Bolshevik revolution of 1917, and in total contrast to the fixed-camera procedures of the time, he was already experimenting with special effects to reveal, through the *kino-glaz*, the camera's eye, film truth – *kino-pravda*. "Film is not merely... facts recorded on film... but the product, a 'higher mathematics' of facts." Crucially, he disdained everyday observationalism: "Our eyes," he wrote, "see very poorly and very little... the movie camera was invented to penetrate more deeply into the visible world."

And the world as he saw it in *Man with a Movie Camera* was not revolutionary enough. The film is not really about filming the filming. That might be its most startling

BFI NATIONAL ARCHIVE (2)

Vertov was a a combative polemicist vehemently insisting that the potential of the cinema as a revolutionary tool was being ignored

BEST DOCS EVER

element, but he thought it a subordinate theme. Rather, it is a critique of Lenin's temporising with the middle class with his New Economic Policy, introduced in the wake of the post-revolution civil war. Vertov shows us beggars and porters and the bourgeoisie parading themselves in horse-drawn carriages. In his view, none of this should have still been around. The Bolshoi Theatre, for Vertov an unacceptable relic of the old regime, is made optically to collapse on itself. Such a criticism, though, was to Party-eyes 'left-infantilism', as bad as – or worse than – his formalist un-'progressive' experimentations.

Nevertheless, the controversy over the film did not finish his career. Unrepentant as the decade turned, he embraced synchronous sound with his flamboyance undiminished. But as stifling Stalinism took hold, he became an ever-more marginal figure. Reduced to editing newsreels, he was to die of undiagnosed cancer in 1954, aged 58. The filmmaker Marina Goldovskaya remembers him sitting in the courtyard of the apartment block in Moscow where she grew up, always looking "very sad".

And then the French translated the *LEF* debates, and in 1960 the anthropologist Jean Rouch decided, like Vertov, to include footage of himself and his co-director Edgar Morin when making *Chronicle of a Summer* (*Chronique d'un été*), a film-ethnography on the "strange tribe that lived in Paris". Rouch made his debt to Vertov explicit: he was after, he announced on screen at the outset of his film, "*un espèce d'un cinéma vérité*", a type of cinema truth – *kino-pravda*. The reappraisal of Vertov's work was underway.

Rouch, like Vertov, was concerned with exploiting the camera eye to reveal deeper truths and, as with Vertov, filming the filmmakers was only part of the attempt to go beyond surface realities. In his films, Rouch not only talked to the people he filmed but also had them re-enact events – whether actual or fantasy – as a way of getting further inside their heads. The line from, say, current controversies over re-enactments and fantasies in Joshua Oppenheimer's *The Act of Killing*, clearly runs back via Rouch to Vertov's *kino-glaz*.

Today, all such possibilities matter more and more. A 'kino-eye' seeing beneath surface realities offers a crucial lifeline as modern technology undercuts and wounds mainstream realist documentary's essential observationalist assumptions, perhaps fatally. Vertov's agenda in *Man with a Movie Camera* signposts nothing less than how documentary can survive the digital destruction of photographic image integrity and yet still, as Vertov wanted, "show us life". Vertov is, in fact, the key to documentary's future. It is no wonder that two years ago *Man with a Movie Camera* entered the top ten in *Sight & Sound*'s 'Greatest films of all time' list and that now it tops the poll for the greatest documentary ever made. It is not merely that a great film now receives its just deserts. Vertov has no reason any longer to be "sad".

UNBELIEVABLE TRUTH
The Stenberg brothers designed the poster (left) for *Man with a Movie Camera* (right and above), Vertov's wildly inventive city symphony of split-screens, fast- and slow-motion, extreme close-ups and stop-motion animation

FILMMAKERS' POLL

Please note: the 50 sample entries below represent just a few edited highlights of the 103 voting entries we received from filmmakers for the 2014 Documentary Poll. The full versions of all the entries will be posted online on 14 August

JOHN AKOMFRAH

UK

A Sixth Part of the World (*Vertov*)
Divine Horsemen (*Deren*)
Jaguar (*Rouch*)
Symbiopsychotaxiplasm: Take One (*Greaves*)
79 primaveras (*Alvarez*)
Hitler: A Film from Germany (*Syberberg*)
For Memory (*Karlin*)
Siddheshwari (*Kaul*)
Histoire(s) du cinéma (*Godard*)
Tarnation (*Caouette*)

● Definitely not a greatest-films list; more a heartfelt 'shout out', if you will, to bravura experiments with 'fertilising ambitions' that are routinely ignored in such surveys. And all deserving, at the very least, a special mention. I learnt more from them over the years than most top-ten list contenders.

THOM ANDERSEN

USA

In the Land of the Head Hunters (*Curtis*) Like Flaherty, but better.
One Sixth of the Earth (*Vertov*)
Night and Fog (*Resnais*) Since I first saw it, this has been the Platonic form of the documentary for me.
... A Valparaíso (*Ivens*) I fell in love with the city.
Far from Vietnam (*Resnais, Klein, Ivens, Varda, Lelouch & Godard*) Unlike its later imitators, it's not far from Vietnam – thanks to Joris Ivens.
The Hour of the Furnaces (*Getino & Solanas*) It's '*neocolonialismo*', not 'post-colonialism'.
The Battle of Chile (*Guzmán*) History written in lightning.
Shoah (*Lanzmann*) The past made present: "The past is not dead, it's not even past."
Too Early, Too Late (*Straub & Huillet*) At last, a cadastral cinema.
What Do Those Old Films Mean (*Burch*) Crazy, dense, enthralling, iconoclastic, sublime, but convincing. It's a pity he never got to make the sequel on early talkies. A vote for a friend, but I couldn't help myself.

MICHAEL APTED

UK

Night and Fog (*Resnais*) The documentary that influenced me the most in its use of passage of time.
Listen to Britain (*Jennings & McAllister*) Film as poetry.
Hospital (*Wiseman*) A great actuality documentary.
The Thin Blue Line (*Morris*)
Hoop Dreams (*James*) A brilliant insight into being young and black in America, and the power of sport in our society.
The Gatekeepers (*Moreh*) The simple and direct power of the talking head.
Roger & Me (*Moore*) A groundbreaking piece using the filmmaker as a central character.
Burden of Dreams (*Blank*) The finest documentary about making documentaries.
Harlan County U.S.A. (*Kopple*) A strong influence on my own work into the quality of life in Appalachian America – its work, music and politics.
Dont Look Back (*Pennebaker*) A landmark musical documentary, warts and all.

CLIO BARNARD

UK

Chronicle of a Summer (*Rouch & Morin*)
Paris Is Burning (*Livingston*)
Dreams of a Life (*Morley*)
Grey Gardens (*Maysles brothers, Hovde & Meyer*)
Housing Problems (*Elton & Anstey*)
This Our Still Life (*Kötting*)
The Thin Blue Line (*Morris*)
Tina Goes Shopping (*Woolcock*)
The Battle of Orgreave (*Figgis*)
The Last Bolshevik (*Marker*)

● These are all films that were pivotal for me in wrestling with what documentary film is and what it can do. They are listed in no particular order.

JAMES BENNING

USA

Titanic (*Cameron*) This is my only vote: an amazing document of bad acting. And, I might add, all films are fictions.

NOEL BURCH

France/USA

Hôtel des invalides (*Franju*)
Le Sang des bêtes (*Franju*)
A Propos de Nice (*Vigo & Kaufman*)
Les Maîtres fous (*Rouch*)
King, Murray (*Hoffman & Gordon*)
Journal de campagne (*Gitaï*)
Hiver (*Gard*)
Diary of a Pregnant Woman (*Varda*)
Mix-up (*Romand*)
Artists Under the Big Top: Perplexed (*Kluge*)

JON BANG CARLSEN

Denmark

Happiness (*Dvortsevoy*) The eloquence of silence.
Night and Fog (*Resnais*)
Salesman (*Maysles brothers & Zwerin*) A beautifully shot portrait of a man's painful awakening from the American dream.
Belovy (*Kossakovsky*) The magic of ordinary people caught by a poet's eye.
Ten Minutes Older (*Frank*) The simplicity of brilliant filmmaking never ceases to inspire me.
Waltz with Bashir (*Folman*) Reality sometimes has to be fooled to let the mask down. Ari Folman does it with animation.
Shoah (*Lanzmann*) Seeing this film makes words obsolete.
The Thin Blue Line (*Morris*)
Dont Look Back (*Pennebaker*) I grew up with this film... a dear aunt.
Harlan County U.S.A. (*Kopple*)

● I consider the documentary film an artform. Art has always granted me an unexpected angle on life, propelling me forward in my own life and affording me the opportunity to act, unlike the kind of one-dimensional journalism that turns people into overly informed, intellectual fossils who never digest whatever fragments of reality are put before them on the screen.

With their backs turned to their own world, they sit and stare at a strange world into which they are incapable of penetrating, because the story is being told by a media monster from outer space with which none of us has any emotions in common.

It is important to build our stories on a series of conscious artistic choices, so we do not, like the voyeur or the fly on the wall, spy on life but take part in it.

JOAN CHURCHILL

USA

Darwin's Nightmare (*Sauper*)
Dont Look Back (*Pennebaker*)
Waiting for Fidel (*Rubbo*)
Soldier Girls (*Broomfield*)
My Country, My Country (*Poitras*)
The Liberace of Baghdad (*McAllister*)
Trouble the Water (*Lessin & Deal*)
The Act of Killing (*Oppenheimer, Cynn & anonymous*)
Diary of a Times Square Thief (*Bense*)
Hiver nomade (*von Stürler*)

JEM COHEN

USA

The House Is Black (*Farokhzad*)
Sans soleil (*Marker*)
Man with a Movie Camera (*Vertov*)
In the Street (*Levitt, Meyers, Agee & Loeb*)
Le Sang des bêtes (*Franju*)
Chronicle of a Summer (*Rouch & Morin*)
Forest of Bliss (*Gardner*)
Salesman (*Maysles brothers & Zwerin*)
Seasons (*Pelechian*)
Dont Look Back (*Pennebaker*)

● With apologies; I don't believe in 'ten best lists' and their hierarchies seem increasingly absurd. Here are some films that mean a lot to me, presented in no particular order.

Are they all 'documentaries' *per se*? I'm not entirely sure. Many are hybrids, sharing a refusal to hew to the limitations or formulas that sometimes define the term. This refusal is, in itself, crucial. They are based in some actualities found in the real world. Many reveal something commonplace, or devastating, which is often hidden from us.

The Emperor's Naked Army Marches On suggests that some truths are so unpalatable and buried that they need to be exploded out of the ground

Mark Cousins

The list is skewed toward older films – a broader selection could include Dvortsevoy's *In the Dark*, Lynne Sachs's *Investigation of a Flame*, J.P. Sniadecki and Véréna Paravel's *Foreign Parts*, Mettler's *Picture of Light*. And it feels ridiculous to leave off films by others such as Vigo, Jennings, Herzog, Hutton, Benning, Brault, Akerman, Kiarostami, Wiseman, Alvarez, Varda, (Robert) Frank – all, to me, essential.

MARK COUSINS

UK

The House Is Black (*Farokhzad*) A cubist movie about Iranian people with leprosy.
Minamata: The Victims and Their World (*Tsuchimoto*) The great protest film? The greatest environmental film? One of the greatest movie epics.
The Emperor's Naked Army Marches On (*Hara*) A film that suggests that some truths are so unpalatable and buried that they need to be exploded out of the ground.
The Last of the Unjust (*Lanzmann*)
Siddheshwari devi (*Kaul*) Visconti meets Satyajit Ray.
Letter from my Village (*Faye*) Simple and sublime.
Wednesday (*Kossakovsky*) Most documentaries have a handful of characters. This one has 70.
November Days: Voices and Choices (*Ophüls*) The Berlin Wall, with a touch of Dietrich.
Zidane: a 21st Century Portrait (*Gordon & Parreno*)
The Battle of Chile (*Guzmán*)

● For me, documentary is the greatest movie genre – the richest, most diverse, alert and compelling. I'd have loved to have included movies directed by Pelechian, Kawase, Ogawa, Patwardhan, Longinotto, Frammartino, Grigsby, Sokurov, Herzog, Varda, Glawogger, Cavalcanti, Kieslowski, Vertov, Welles, Maximilian Schell, Honkasalo, Mograbi, Michael Moore and Herz Frank; to think of these is to see the vast range of the field. My ten are, like life, intense and often tragic, but have touches of Visconti or Lubitsch.

PETER DAVIS

USA

Roger & Me (*Moore*)
Bowling for Columbine (*Moore*)
Fahrenheit 9/11 (*Moore*)
Sicko (*Moore*)
Valentino: The Last Emperor (*Tynauer*)
Welfare (*Wiseman*)
The War Room (*Pennebaker & Hegedus*)
Stories We Tell (*Polley*)
When We Were Kings (*Gast*)
Gimme Shelter (*Maysles brothers & Zwerin*)

KODWO ESHUN

UK

Cuadecuc Vampir (*Portabella*)
La Région centrale (*Snow*)
Edvard Munch (*Watkins*)
Nightcleaners (*Berwick Street Film Collective*)
The Song of the Shirt (*Clayton & Curling*)

Sans soleil (*Marker*)
Handsworth Songs (*Akomfrah*)
How to Live in the German Federal Republic (*Farocki*)
Un Spécialiste, Portrait D'un Criminel Moderne (*Sivan*)
Jai Bhim Comrade (*Patwardhan*)

SOPHIE FIENNES

UK

Titicut Follies (*Wiseman*)
Grey Gardens (*Maysles brothers, Hovde & Meyer*)
Sans soleil (*Marker*)
Land of Silence and Darkness (*Herzog*)
Belovy (*Kossakovsky*)
Fata Morgana (*Herzog*)
Night and Fog (*Resnais*)
Hold Me Tight, Let Me Go (*Longinotto*)
Asylum (*Robinson*)
The Sorrow and the Pity (*Marcel Ophüls*)

● This is a list of the documentary films that have profoundly affected me and inspired me to make films.

"To possess the world in the form of images is, precisely, to re-experience the unreality and remoteness of the real." Susan Sontag's point is well made. Documentary films are composed of splinters of time passed – as such, the best should continue to haunt us, not least because the moving image itself is strange and uncanny. And all film, fiction or otherwise, is subjective.

The subjective synthesis that formed these films is something like alchemy. Not into gold (and very often of no great commercial value), but a crucial insight and the evidence of life itself.

DICK FONTAINE

UK

Listen to Britain (*Jennings & McAllister*) Forget the jingoism, consider the rhythm and the counterpoint. Jennings brought poetry into documentary language as, of course, had Dziga Vertov, and even Leni Riefenstahl.
Chronicle of a Summer (*Rouch & Morin*) For me, the legacy Rouch left us represents a challenge still not fully explored by contemporary filmmakers.
Dont Look Back (*Pennebaker*)
Serbian Epics (*Pawlikowski*) A brilliantly revealing, tangential view of the war in Bosnia that shows how cinema can illuminate questions way beyond the limits of journalism.
Belovy (*Kossakovsky*) Documentary cinema at its most seductive. Kossakovsky's body of work so far – particularly *Belovy, Tishe!* and *¡Vivan las Antípodas!* – has the warmth and wisdom of a true poet.
Hoop Dreams (*James*) An absolutely gripping piece of storytelling of dreams and struggle that proves that a documentary narrative can sustain momentum at least as well as fiction.
The Revolution Will Not Be Televised (*Bartley & O'Briain*) How persistence and luck – the two most necessary requirements for a documentary maker – can transform an unambitious biographical sketch into one of the most gripping and revealing political dramas ever filmed.
Darwin's Nightmare (*Sauper*)
Sisters in Law (*Ayisi & Longinotto*) Of Kim Longinotto's magnificent body of work, how to choose? This gripping narrative of the campaign of two splendidly compassionate women lawyers against the endemic sexism of Cameronian society is my favourite.
The Up series (*Apted & Almond*)

● My list is chronological and is not a league table. The one almost unforgivable omission is Patricio Guzmán's 2010 masterwork *Nostalgia for the Light*, but it allows me to give him the last word, which should be tattooed on our brains and projected by us on the walls of our television companies: "A country without documentary is like a family without a scrapbook."

Belovy is documentary cinema at its most seductive. Kossakovsky's body of work has the warmth and wisdom of a true poet

Dick Fontaine

SU FRIEDRICH

USA

The Gleaners and I (*Varda*) A perfect case of how to interweave the maker's experience with those of her subjects.
Basic Training (*Wiseman*) It's hard to choose among so many of his films; this one, for its complex portrait of the many sides of army life. It gives me chills every time.
Paris Is Burning (*Livingston*)

Harlan County is a film that needed to be made then, and still needs to be seen, because the story it tells is not much different than the one being lived now

Su Friedrich

One of the first films to give drag queens their 'day in court' and to win the case for them.
The Up series (*Apted & Almond*) If documentary films are a record of life as it's lived, then nothing beats this.
Harlan County, U.S.A. (*Kopple*) A film about the working class that needed to be made then, and still needs to be seen, because the story it tells is, unfortunately, not that much different than the one being lived now, 38 years later.
Shoah (*Lanzmann*) *Sui generis.*
The Devil Never Sleeps (*Portillo*) A film that uses humour in many small and clever ways while dealing with an ostensibly grim subject.
Portrait of Jason (*Clarke*) It's hard to choose between her films, but how can one resist Jason Holliday?
Les Maîtres fous (*Rouch*) A brilliant exposé of the effects of colonialism in Africa (here, in Niger). It remains a scathing indictment of the depredations visited on people across the continent.
Symbiopsychotaxiplasm: Take One (*Greaves*) This is perhaps not entirely a documentary, but it's certainly enough of one, and it's in my top ten list for any genre, since it bends in every wonderful way.

JOHN GIANVITO

USA

Starting Place/Point De Départ (*Kramer*) Mizoguchi used to say that a filmmaker ought to wash his eyes before every shot, a sensation one can have in many of Robert Kramer's best films. Returning to Hanoi a quarter of a century after he shot *The People's War*, Kramer renders a vivid and poignant meditation on the 'after-images' of war.
Chircales (*Rodriguez & Silva*) *Chircales* offers an indelible portrait of the exploitation of a family of workers in the brickyards on the outskirts of Bogotá. As searing as *Land Without Bread*, as instructive as *The Wretched of the Earth*, and still as relevant.
How to Behave (*Thuy*) Dying of cancer, a cameraman asks his friends to make a film on the subject of 'tu-te' – human relations, fraternity or, simply, kindness. A revelatory work from one of cinema's most dedicated and least-known humanists.
The Journey (*Watkins*) Perhaps no other film has so generously, thoughtfully and maturely afforded us space to meaningfully reflect on the ever-pressing issues of militarisation and nuclear weaponry.
79 primaveras (*Alvarez*)
Minamata: The Victims and Their World (*Noriaki*)
A Grin Without a Cat (*Marker*)
L' Algérie en flammes (*Vautier*) From the few Vautier films I've been fortunate to see, it is clear that if the body of his work had not been so consistently suppressed and even willfully destroyed, his place in the annals of committed cinema would be pre-eminent.
Too Early, Too Late (*Straub & Huillet*) A revolutionary film about revolutions, one of the few great landscape films, a film capable of photographing the invisible – the wind, dreams, aspirations past and present.
Nostalgia for the Light (*Guzmán*) Guzman elegantly sets his long-term commitment to the preservation and examination of historical memory into the broader human search for meaning.

● As should probably go without saying, such a list represents the limits of what I have seen, as well as the limits of what I can recollect at this precise moment in time (and the limits of the exercise). What it also represents is a prioritising of work that aims to remind us, first and foremost, that we do not live in the best of all possible worlds – and that there are things we can do about that.

What I continue to find not only useful but necessary in the practice of documentary was best articulated by Jean Rouch: "To make a film is to tell a story. I go in the subway, I look at it and I note that the subway is dirty and that the people are bored – that's not a film. I go on the subway and I say to myself, 'These people are bored. Why? Why do they accept it? Why don't they smash the subway? Why do they sit here going over the same route every day?' At that moment you can make a film."

AMOS GITAI

Israel

India (*Rossellini*)
Caught in the Act (*Depardon*)
Public Housing (*Wiseman*)
Salesman (*Maysles brothers & Zwerin*)
De Grote Vakantie (*Keuken*)
Seventeenth Parallel (*Ivens*)
Le Sang des bêtes (*Franju*)
The Gleaners and I (*Varda*)
Opération Lune (*Karel*)
Khlebny Dyen (*Dvortsevoy*)

● Two more: Honkasalo's *The 3 Rooms of Melancholia* and Farahani's *Fifi Howls from Happiness.*

PAUL GREENGRASS

UK

Dont Look Back (*Pennebaker*)
The Battle of the Somme (*Malins & McDowell*)
Nanook of the North (*Flaherty*)
Man with a Movie Camera (*Vertov*)
The Demonstration (*Sheppard & Woodhead*)
Primary (*Drew*)
London Can Take It! (*Watt & Jennings*)
Man on Wire (*Marsh*)
Harlan County U.S.A. (*Kopple*)

JOSE LUIS GUERIN

Spain

Finis Terrae (*Epstein*)
Night and Fog (*Resnais*)
Tire Die (*Birri*)
Ociel del Toa (*Guillén Landrián*)
Le Train en marche (*Marker*)
News from Home (*Akerman*)
Milano 83 (*Olmi*)
Urgences (*Depardon*)
The Quince Tree Sun (*Erice*)
West of the Tracks (*Wang*)

● I cast an 11th vote for Sergey Dvortsevoy's *In the Dark* (2004).

BARBARA HAMMER
USA

Man with a Movie Camera (*Vertov*) This masterpiece is a touchstone for me and an inspiration for all my work. Most importantly, a film is made in the editing and the quick-witted, adroit and brilliant Elizaveta Svilova was the editor and should be credited much more than she is presently.
The Atomic Cafe (*Rafferty brothers & Loader*) The general public was shocked by the extreme collage methods of cartoons next to nuclear clouds, humour next to sadness. I was uplifted and challenged by the possibility to include everything in a documentary.
The Gleaners and I (*Varda*) All of Varda's work should be chosen. The humanity and personal views of a woman filmmaker unafraid to show her age, her vision, her perception and her tiny camera make this film the ultimate road documentary for me.
Paris Is Burning (*Livingston*) A fascinating exploration of a drag culture hidden within clear sight, *Paris Is Burning* takes into a ball room, twirls us until we're dizzy and then frees us into the night with a love for these grand folks.
The Act of Seeing with One's Own Eyes (*Brakhage*) Brakhage takes a detour here to film real-life forensic pathologists in a mortuary laboratory. Get ready: no illusions.
Regret to Inform (*Sonneborn*) Sonneborn, a Vietnam War widow goes to Vietnam to seek reconciliation with her grief. The film finds balance by turning midway to a Vietnamese war widow's story as a sailboat turns.
Tongues Untied (*Riggs*) The great imaginative creative spirit of Marlon Riggs left us this ground-breaking documentary of a queer, black, gay, trans community of men with the joy of improvisation, body dance, hip-hop and poetry.
Videograms of a Revolution (*Ujica & Farocki*) A real-time, multiple-camera film shot by amateurs and professionals shows a revolution in the making as the heinous Nicolae Ceausescu is deposed.
Minamata: The Victims and Their World (*Tsuchimoto*) Tsuchimoto's *Minamata* series puts the focus on the individuals who suffer an environmentally caused disease through personal stories. Tsuchimoto's shockingly revealing documentaries of pain and suffering cry to be revisited for their compassionate, political, exquisitely filmed work.
Zhi Tong Zhi (*Cui*) Brave, gentle queer activist, screenwriter and filmmaker Cui Zien gives us an overview of the radically different historic and cultural forces in the Chinese lesbian, gay, transgendered and queer peoples. Fascinating, revealing, outspoken and challenging.

HEDDY HONIGMANN
Netherlands

The Quince Tree Sun (*Erice*)
Man with a Movie Camera (*Vertov*)
The Gleaners and I (*Varda*)
West of the Tracks (*Wang*)
Sans soleil (*Marker*)
The Lion Hunters (*Rouch*)
Shoah (*Lanzmann*)
Near Death (*Wiseman*)
Tire Die (*Birri*)
Flat Jungle (*Keuken*)
● To choose is awful. And why not 20? I've left out great masters like Abbas Kiarostami and Raymond Depardon, and short jewels such as Alain Resnais's *Toute la mémoire du monde*; a film by the Maysles brothers is missing, as is one by Epstein. And besides Erice's film, another younger Spanish documentary could have been listed: *En construcción* by José Luis Guerín.

ISAAC JULIEN
UK

Sans soleil (*Marker*)
Man with a Movie Camera (*Vertov*)
A Man from the Sun (*Elliot*)
Nightcleaners (*Berwick Street Film Collective*)
A Tale of the Wind (*Ivens & Loridan*)
Les Maîtres fous (*Rouch*)
The Hour of the Furnaces (*Getino & Solanas*)
Darwin's Nightmare (*Sauper*)
● My very first formations were those of documentary, but they were far from the old, detached, realist modes. What shaped me were political documentaries with a central play between sound and image. I made the work I did because I wanted to oppose the old realist documentary modes – in a way, I wanted to totally kill off those methods.

However, I've always had a problem with formal experimentation for its own sake. I made *Territories* when Chris Marker's film *Sans soleil* had been released. In his film, I could see all these different aesthetic registers, such as the technical ways he was thinking about memory and how that was treated through video solarisation. *Sans soleil* radicalised how we in Sankofa were thinking, both about video and about documentary. Marker's work, which took a film-essay form, had the idea of wrestling with film, but he was also wrestling with the archive. Marker was grappling with video-art effects, too, but not just to have them present in a piece. That has been my basic problem with purely abstract films: in formal terms, they might be radically interesting, but in terms of content, it's never radical enough. The documentaries I respect the most are those that manage to reconcile those two poles.

MARC ISAACS
UK

Diary 1973-83 (*Perlov*) One man with a movie camera finding the poetry in the everyday. This is a brilliant example of the personal documentary, but one that looks outward rather than indulging in the self. A film that teaches how to *see*.
Anything Can Happen (*Lozinski*) The filmmaker's six-year-old son approaches elderly people in a Warsaw park, and questions of life and death emerge in a humorous and profoundly moving way. It's a deceptively simple film, extremely elegant and a perfectly formed gem.
Shoah (*Lanzmann*)
A Propos de Nice (*Vigo & Kaufman*)
Chronicle of a Summer (*Rouch & Morin*)
Phantom India (*Malle*) A totally immersive experience into the India of Louis Malle.
A.B.C. Africa (*Kiarostami*) This is such a refreshing and human film, full of joy. Where others would have come up with the usual clichéd approach to African problems, Kiarostami, of course, makes us feel the opposite emotions.
Amsterdam Global Village (*van der Keuken*) This is a film that trusts the image and one that I show to students to encourage the creative potential of the documentary form.
The Gleaners and I (*Varda*)
This Is Not a Film (*Panahi & Mirtahmaseb*) I found this film compelling and fresh in its directness and honesty. A great insight into contemporary Iran from inside an apartment. A treat for all filmmakers and lovers of Iranian cinema.
● All of these films are deeply personal and this is what makes them great. All of these filmmakers have something in common: they are individuals with a unique view of the world and they love people. They all manage to find the right form through which to express their 'stories'. They aren't the typical three-act structure films that the mainstream worships. They eschew the obvious and look for something different. They are not scared of the ordinary or the everyday. They tell their stories in a considered way and allow you to enter into the frame and to dream a little. They never shout at you and are not afraid to take unexpected twists and turns. These filmmakers follow(ed) their instincts because that is all they have/had.

ASIF KAPADIA
UK

The Up series (*Apted*) This series is incredible. The simplicity of the idea. The nerve of the filmmakers and the financiers to keep it going. It only improves with time.
Sans soleil (*Marker*)
The Thin Blue Line (*Morris*) Before I saw this film, I had no idea that a documentary could be a thriller, so cinematic and so dramatic.
Fourteen Days in May (*Hamann*) Saw this on the BBC while still at school and was so angry afterwards with the injustice. Clive Stafford Smith became my hero; this film affected me in a way few dramas ever had.
Hoop Dreams (*James*) An epic story of two ordinary kids following their dreams. My first experience of the master Steve James. Truth can be far more complex and emotional than fiction.
A Great Day in Harlem (*Bach*) An entire movie created from a single image and a rostrum camera.
When We Were Kings (*Gast*) My hero Ali captured in the prime of his life. One of the most charismatic men ever, I don't want to see an actor playing him. I don't want someone pretending to move like him, I want the real thing. Love the music, editing, the use of archive, Norman Mailer, the humour, the poetry! This film was my main reference while making *Senna*.
Koyaanisqatsi: Life out of Balance (*Reggio*) Pure cinema. Incredible images and music. I still dream about making a film like this one day.
Dark Days (*Singer*) Love this incredible film. A friend gave me the DVD. I sat at home alone, watched it, then watched every deleted scene, then watched it over again, cried buckets. The story behind the making of the film is every bit as emotional and powerful as what is on screen.
The Act of Killing (*Oppenheimer, Cynn & anonymous*) I've never seen anything quite like this. Astonishing. Shocking. Brave filmmaking.

PATRICK KEILLER
UK

The Arrival of a Train (*Lumière brothers*) Lumière no. 653 – the version with Lumière family members on the platform.
Man with a Movie Camera (*Vertov*)
Rain (*Ivens*)
The Old Port of Marseilles (*Moholy-Nagy*)
A Propos de Nice (*Vigo & Kaufman*)
Night Mail (*Watt & Wright*)
Le Sang des bêtes (*Franju*)
Toute la mémoire du monde (*Resnais*)
Le Joli Mai (*Marker & Lhomme*)
News from Home (*Akerman*)

BEEBAN KIDRON
UK

Shoah (*Lanzmann*)
The Up series (*Apted & Almond*)
High School (*Wiseman*)
Crumb (*Zwigoff*)
Triumph of the Will (*Riefenstahl*)
The Thin Blue Line (*Morris*)
Nanook of the North (*Flaherty*)
Roger & Me (*Moore*)
When We Were Kings (*Gast*)
The Times of Harvey Milk (*Epstein*)
● The documentary is a powerful artform – I just hope that celebrity presenters, voiceovers and cliffhangers so loved by factual television do not put paid to films like these. I did not want to put these in a pecking order – they are all brilliant and I could have found 10 more equally so. So the order is fairly random.

VIKTOR KOSSAKOVSKY
Russia

Ten Minutes Older (*Frank*)
Man of Aran (*Flaherty*)
Man with a Movie Camera (*Vertov*)
Spiritual Voices (*Sokurov*)
Workingman's Death (*Glawogger*)
Seasons (*Pelechian*)
Position Among the Stars (*Retel Helmrich*)
Look at his Face (*Kogan*)
Our Mother is a Hero (*Obukhovich*)
A Tram Runs Through the City (*Stanukinas*)
● This is a list I made for screening at IDFA (International Documentary Film Festival Amsterdam) in 2012, here in order of importance to me.

They're films that challenged me both when I first saw them and again when I revisited them. Instead of trying to tell you something, they try to show you something.

If you were to add up all the new elements these films have added to the language of cinema, you would have the perfect documentary alphabet.

ANDREW KOTTING
UK

Titicut Follies (*Wiseman*) A reminder of how precarious the institutionalisation of unwell human beings is. Yet despite the callousness of the environment to which we are privy, somehow the human spirit manages to find space in which to crawl through and soar.
The Moon and the Sledgehammer (*Trevelyan*) I never tire of watching this film. It showed me a way to make films that was at once familiar and magical, visceral and elemental, connected and away-with-the-fairies.
Land of Silence and Darkness (*Herzog*) A brief gawp at the world of the deaf-blind and an insight into touch language. Unforgettable, unfathomable and monumental.
Life series (*Attenborough*) *Life on Earth, The Living Planet, The Trials of Life, The Private Life of Plants, The Life of Birds, The Life of Mammals* and *Life in the Undergrowth*. A world without them or David Attenborough is unimaginable. As vital as the complete works of Shakespeare.
Burden of Dreams (*Blank*) With this film Blank captures the delirious and often demonic Werner Herzog at work. A portrait of a megalomaniacal man possessed, a man on the edge, a man of meaning existing in that foggy no man's land between documentary and reality.
The Story of Film: An Odyssey (*Cousins*) The sheer scale and ambition of the project is awe-inspiring but it is the filmmaker's enthusiasm and eloquence that completely seduce.
Sherman's March (*McElwee*) It meanders and flows in all directions, but the film is ultimately a portrait of Ross McElwee. The playfulness and rhythms are antithetical to the conventions of documentary film.
The Great White Silence (*Ponting*) Corporeal, visceral and contemplative. A brilliant testament to the reassuring ridiculousness of human endeavour.
Grey Gardens (*Maysles brothers, Hovde & Meyer*)
Blue (*Jarman*) A reminder that cinema does not always need images. The film transcends cinema, television, gallery and radio and would be equally as powerful projected into the night sky.
● There should have been room for *Touching the Void, The Arbor, The Act of Killing,*

In *Nostalgia for the Light* Guzmán elegantly sets his long-term commitment to the examination of historical memory into the broader human search for meaning

John Gianvito

In *Burden of Dreams* Les Blank captures the delirious and often demonic Werner Herzog at work. A portrait of a megalomaniacal man possessed, a man on the edge

Andrew Kötting

***Paris Is Burning* takes us into a drag culture hidden within clear sight, twirls us until we're dizzy and then frees us into the night with a love for these grand folks**

Barbara Hammer

***Hoop Dreams* is an epic story of two ordinary kids following their dreams. My first experience of the master Steve James. Truth can be far more complex than fiction**

Asif Kapadia

Pina and *Searching for Sugar Man* or the *oeuvres* of Nick Broomfield, Molly Dineen and Ben Rivers, but space is precious, so it's out with the new and in with the old.

Meantime every documentary film, even – especially – the least self-referential, demonstrates in its every frame that an artist's chief material is himself.

LECH KOWALSKI

Poland/USA

The Battle of Chile (*Guzmán*)
Man of Aran (*Flaherty*)
Seasons (*Pelechian*)
Salesman (*Maysles brothers & Zwerin*)
Man with a Movie Camera (*Vertov*)
28 Up (*Apted*)
The Chelsea Girls (*Warhol*)
Portrait of Jason (*Clarke*)
Titicut Follies (*Wiseman*)
The Sorrow and the Pity (*Ophüls*)

JOHN KRISH

UK

Bowling for Columbine (*Moore*)
Capturing the Friedmans (*Jarecki*)
Night and Fog (*Resnais*)
Salesman (*Maysles brothers & Zwerin*)
Shoah (*Lanzmann*)
The Sorrow and the Pity (*Ophüls*)
The Thin Blue Line (*Morris*)
The Times of Harvey Milk (*Epstein*)
Titicut Follies (*Wiseman*)
Triumph of the Will (*Riefenstahl*)

● For me, a documentary is an essay on film and the ones that resonate contain the essence of the director.

JORGEN LETH

Denmark

Hospital (*Wiseman*) Wiseman's method is simple: see what happens. There's blood, tragedy, panic and great comedy in this penetration of a world normally not explored.
Near Death (*Wiseman*) A moving story about people in an institution, facing death, waiting to die. The film is six hours long but doesn't feel so, because you want to know more.
Welfare (*Wiseman*) Another of Wiseman's stories about institutions. That is his main theme: tell about institutions – and redefine them. Again, go in and see what happens. A lot of strange human things happen. It's engaging.
My Best Fiend (*Herzog*) This is the film we needed about the love-hate relationship of the director with his favourite actor, Klaus Kinski. Hilarious and shocking.
Little Dieter Needs to Fly (*Herzog*) A German-born US fighter pilot, captured and humiliated by the Vietnamese, re-enacts his almost incredible escape, and how his present life in his California is like a surreal pantomime.
First Cousin Once Removed (*Berliner*) Several filmmakers have made films about Alzheimer-suffering relatives. This one is the best I've seen.
A Stravinsky Portrait (*Leacock*) Richard Leacock is a giant in the history of documentary filmmaking. This film is a beautiful essay about one of the greatest composers of the 20th century, Igor Stravinsky.
Santiago (*Salles*) João Moreira Salles filmed his family's Argentinian-born butler in 1992, but didn't get into editing it until 2005. A very moving reflection about time passing and a portrait of a wonderful character.
The End and the Beginning (*Coutinho*) The director and crew arrive in a corner of Brazil with no research, characters, sites or themes and find people who have stories to tell. I admire Coutinho for his courage to just start somewhere, for his patience and sensitivity.
Playing (*Coutinho*) An amazingly virtuoso filmic essay about reality and playing.

SERGEI LOZNITSA

Ukraine

Man with a Movie Camera (*Vertov*) A cinema manifesto written in a cinema language.
The War Game (*Watkins*) Welcome to a new reality.
Beginning (*Pelechian*) The film is a metaphor.
Koyaanisqatsi: Life out of Balance (*Reggio*) This film is like a symphony.
San clemente (*Depardon & Ristelhueber*) Sensitive, delicate, singular experience of insanity.
Belovy (*Kossakovsky*) A film as a knife cut.
Vertical Features Remake (*Greenaway*) A film as an abstraction.
La Seine a rencontré paris (*Ivens*) A film as a poem.
Olympia (*Riefenstahl*) A film as a cult.
Berlin: Symphony of a City (*Ruttmann*) Film as improvisation.

KEVIN MACDONALD

UK

Gimme Shelter (*Maysles brothers & Zwerin*) I love the fact that the editor, Charlotte Zwerin, gets a directing credit on this. So often in documentaries the editor is at least as important to the finished film as the director. This is the best film ever made about performance – but also manages to say so much about the hippy dream turning sour.
The Unseen (*Janek*) *The Unseen* is generally unseen but is a film that had an enormous impact on me when I saw it at the inaugural It's All True doc festival in Brazil. It tells the story of blind children who become obsessed with taking photographs.
Now (*Alvarez*) The most potent campaigning film ever made. Only five minutes long, it is raw, technically innovative and angry.
Listen to Britain (*Jennings & McAllister*) Jennings was a genius at yanking together unexpected images, the John Donne of cinema. This film is pure poetry and makes patriotism seem not just acceptable but admirable.
The Thin Blue Line (*Morris*) I love its intelligence, its coolness and its humour. It influenced every film I have ever made.

Welfare is one of Wiseman's stories about institutions. That is his main theme: tell about institutions – and redefine them. Strange human things happen

Jørgen Leth

When We Were Kings (*Gast*) The most exciting and uplifting nonfiction experience I have had in a cinema.
Darwin's Nightmare (*Sauper*) An imaginative, fiendishly gothic tale about the the survival of the fittest and the Nile Perch.
Roger & Me (*Moore*) Michael Moore brought entertainment back into documentary films – and made it the strange bedfellow of anger.
Hotel Terminus (*Ophüls*) Ophüls is a genius and I could just have easily chosen *The Sorrow and The Pity* for this list.
Waltz with Bashir (*Folman*) Because it did something new.

JAMES MARSH

UK

Man with a Movie Camera (*Vertov*)
Le Sang des bêtes (*Franju*)
The War Game (*Watkins*)
Salesman (*Maysles brothers & Zwerin*)
Hospital (*Wiseman*)
Fata Morgana (*Herzog*)
The Battle of Chile (*Guzmán*)
The Thin Blue Line (*Morris*)
My Winnipeg (*Maddin*)
Waltz with Bashir (*Folman*)

● Each of these films seems to me to enlarge on the possibilities of the medium and each of the filmmakers (with the exception of Ari Folman) has a body of work I revere and admire. The other characteristic they share is a commitment to the poetry and power of the visual image, both discovered and created. They are all truly cinematic films in every respect.

If there is one filmmaker on this list who stands above the others as a documentarian, for me, it would be Frederick Wiseman. As soon as a Wiseman film starts, you know you are with the perfect guide – his editing rhythms are poised and hypnotic, and his attention to detail and to the primacy of the potent, revelatory image is constant and surprising. Above all, it his generosity and respect towards his characters that distinguishes his work. Interestingly, for a filmmaker who has no use for the adornments of score or created imagery, he describes his works as 'reality fictions'. I can't think of a better description of the documentary medium or indeed a better alibi for us all.

Humphrey Jennings was the John Donne of cinema. _Listen to Britain_ is pure poetry and makes patriotism seem not just acceptable but admirable

Kevin Macdonald

CAROL MORLEY

UK

Portrait of Jason (*Clarke*) *Portrait of Jason* is transgressive and fascinating; it speaks of personal experiences and elegantly taps into a wider, secret history of the time.
Heart of the Angel (*Dineen*) I haven't seen this for many years, but if I close my eyes I can still see the people in the film, and hear their voices, their stories.
Close-Up (*Kiarostami*) Like all great documentaries *Close-Up* has a brilliant story at its heart, fascinating characters and is wonderfully told. It foregrounds the constructed nature of documentary and that truth is a very difficult notion and hard to find.
In the Street (*Levitt, Meyers, Agee & Loeb*) The film effortlessly and beautifully records the people who live out their lives on a New York street. It's much more than observational reportage though. It's a real work of art.
Shinjuku Boys (*Longinotto & Williams*) Kim Longinotto has made such a significant contribution to documentary and I could have chosen more than one of her films, but I chose this one about transgender because it was the first one of hers I ever saw.
Grey Gardens (*Maysles brothers, Hovde & Meyer*)
Sherman's March (*McElwee*) This is unforgettable and had a major impact on me. McElwee constructs a world where he is the lead character, who refuses to disappear, and therefore acknowledges that a documentary is as much about the person who makes it as the participants.
Dear Diary (*Moretti*) *Dear Diary* goes beyond the observational and is a highly constructed piece. As a means of personal exploration it is very appealing to me as it takes the documentary form away from being anthropological. It's warmly and surreally funny too.
The Thin Blue Line (*Morris*)
Tina Goes Shopping (*Woolcock*)

This took documentary (if it can be described as such) to a new level. It was inspiring to see how Penny blurred the lines between fact and fiction. The film gave control, agency and opportunity to the people involved.

● While the films I've chosen challenge ideas of truth, in different ways, they are all authentic. It is clear that those who made them believe wholeheartedly in the stories they tell, and believe in the people that they bring to the screen and create a lasting legacy for: even if, like Randall Adams in *The Thin Blue Line*, they bring a lawsuit against you later...

DJO TUNDA MUNGA

Congo

The Sorrow and the Pity (*Ophüls*)
Statues Also Die (*Resnais, Marker & Cloquet*)
The 3 Rooms of Melancholia (*Honkasalo*)
Five Broken Cameras (*Burnat & Davidi*)
Divorce Iranian Style (*Longinotto & Mir-Hosseini*)
Welfare (*Wiseman*)
Cuba: une odyssée Africaine (*El Tahri*)
Episode III: Enjoy Poverty (*Martens*)
Concerning Violence (*Olsson*)
Corpus Christi (*Prieur & Mordillat*)

NAJWA NAJJAR

Palestine

Arna's Children (*Khamis, & Danniël*)
Ford Transit (*Abu-assad*)
Slingshot Hip Hop (*Salloum*)
Jaffa, the Orange's Clockwork (*Sivan*)
Five Broken Cameras (*Burnat & Davidi*)
Jeremy Hardy Versus the Israeli Army (*Sansour*)
Ici et ailleurs (*Miéville & Godard*)
A World Not Ours (*Fleifel*)
They Do Not Exist (*Ali*)
Naim & Wadee'a (*Najjar*)

● I have only chosen documentaries from and about Palestine by both Palestinian and non-Palestinian filmmakers to shed light on the place and the people living there.

Choosing my first documentary was not for self-promotion or vanity: it is one of very few Palestinian films that has been considered important worldwide, as it chronicles and records life in Palestine prior to the creation of the State of Israel in 1948, through the story of one Palestinian family living in Jaffa.

JOSHUA OPPENHEIMER

Denmark

Titicut Follies (*Wiseman*)
Close-Up (*Kiarostami*)
Shoah (*Lanzmann*)
Even Dwarfs Started Small (*Herzog*)
W.R. – Mysteries of the Organism (*Makavejev*)
Animal Love (*Seidl*)
Gates of Heaven (*Morris*)
The Apple (*Makhmalbaf*)
The Hour of the Furnaces (*Getino & Solanas*)
Perfumed Nightmare (*Tahimik*)

Shirley Clarke brilliantly explores the inconsistencies and contradictions inherent in any interview. *Portrait of Jason* is transgressive and fascinating

Carol Morley

● Whenever we film anybody, they stage themselves, acting out fantasies – half-remembered, second-hand, third-rate – that they wished they fulfilled.

The films I've chosen here teach us that the 'state of nature' for nonfiction film is to reveal, prism-like, how fiction always constitutes our 'facts'. These filmmakers deploy their camera not to record, but to provoke, and in the process have the courage to immerse themselves in the manic, delirious and tragic play of fantasies that make us what we are – inevitably and assuredly staggering out of the darkness into blinding truths.

ANAND PATWARDHAN

India

The Battle of Chile (*Guzmán*)
In the Year of the Pig (*De Antonio*)
Dark Circle (*Beaver, Irving & Landy*)
Manufacturing Consent (*Achbar & Wintonick*)
Heta Village (*Ogawa*)
Hotel Terminus (*Ophüls*)
Salata Baladi (*Kamal*)
Muktir Gaan (*Masud & Masud*)
Narmada: A Valley Rises (*Kazimi*)
Control Room (*Noujaim*)

PAWEL PAWLIKOWSKI

Poland/UK

Man with a Movie Camera (*Vertov*)
Sans soleil (*Marker*)

Each scene in *Man of Aran* contains the film as a whole, and each close-up has a stunning force. It crossed a line filmmakers are still investigating

Walter Salles

A Few Stories About Man (*Dziworski*)
Salesman (*Maysles brothers & Zwerin*)
One Day in People's Poland (*Drygas*)
Hush! (*Kossakovsky*)
From a Night Porter's Point of View (*Kieslowski*)
Psychodrama (*Piwowski*)
Happiness (*Dvortsevoy*)
Woodstock: 3 Days of Peace & Music (*Wadleigh*)

● I'm not sure these are the best of all time – I haven't seen enough to judge and memory isn't what it used to be – but here are some docs that left a mark. They come in different shapes and sizes. I don't go along with the current idea that a great documentary has to be feature-length and in English.

NICOLAS PHILIBERT

France

Man of Aran (*Flaherty*)
Night and Fog (*Resnais*)
Herman Slobbe – Blind Kind II (*van der Keuken*)
Seasons (*Pelechian*)
Welfare (*Wiseman*)
Sans soleil (*Marker*)
Homework (*Kiarostami*)
In Vanda's Room (*Costa*)
S21: The Khmer Rouge Killing Machine (*Panh*)
West of the Tracks (*Wang*)

● My choices are in chronological order.

BEN RIVERS

UK

In the Street (*Levitt, Meyers, Agee & Loeb*)
Land Without Bread (*Buñuel*)
The House Is Black (*Farokhzad*)
D'est (*Akerman*)
Fake Fruit Factory (*Strand*)
A Grin Without a Cat (*Marker*)
Häxan (*Christensen*)
Filmmaker's Holiday (*Keuken*)
Horendi (*Rouch*)
Milestones (*Kramer*)

● I also vote for *Land of Silence and Darkness* (1971) by Werner Herzog and *Forest of Bliss* (1986) by Robert Gardner. It is impossible to say what is the greatest. I'm not even sure what that means, but these films have meant very much to me personally, and I consider them truly great. I got the list to 12, in no particular order, and then couldn't lose two.

WALTER SALLES

Brazil

Man of Aran (*Flaherty*) Each scene in Flaherty's masterpiece contains the film as a whole, and each close-up has a stunning expressive force. The film crossed the line between documentary and fiction and stirred a discussion that filmmakers are continuing to investigate to this day (as in Jia Zhangke's extraordinary *24 City*).
A Man Marked to Die (*Coutinho*) Two decades after starting to shoot a film that was interrupted by the 1964 military *coup d'état* in Brazil, Eduardo Coutinho re-encounters his characters from that film. An essential film on the 60s diaspora in Brazil, by our most important documentarian.
Talking Heads (*Kieslowski*) Polish citizens from seven to 77 years of age answer the same question: "Who am I, and what do I expect of life?" This documentary's apparent simplicity hides a depth that touches upon the unsayable.
West of the Tracks (*Wang*) This nine-hour documentary focuses on the inhabitants of a Chinese city who are being resettled elsewhere after the area's steel mills became obsolete. Dominique Païni said that few films fit so well Bazin's idea of cinema as a perfect mould for society, in a given time.
Hanoi martes trece (*Alvarez*) Alvarez, the greatest Cuban documentarian of all time, mixes the intimate and the epic in this entrancing film.
Dont Look Back (*Pennebaker*)
In Public (*Jia*) A meditation on men and women on the move in public transportation in northern China, this is a quiet, poetic masterpiece by one of the world's best filmmakers.
Mondovino (*Nossiter*) A brilliant analysis of the effects of globalisation, *Mondovino* reveals how taste is being dictated and redefined.
En construcción (*Guerín*) As a popular, historical part of Barcelona is being torn down to give way to skyscrapers, Guerín unveils how the mutation of the urban landscape has a profound effect on its inhabitants. The camera seems to disappear behind the human drama at play.
Moi, un noir (*Rouch*) Jean Rouch proves that, first and foremost, the documentary form allows the existence of memory, recording today what may no longer exist tomorrow.

● My votes are in no particular order. Two more: Les Blank's *Burden of Dreams* and Eduardo Coutinho's *Playing*.

J.P. SNIADECKI

USA

Leviathan (*Castaing-Taylor & Paravel*)
West of the Tracks (*Wang*)
Karamay (*Xu*)
Four Corners (*Benning*)
Soft Fiction (*Strand*)
The Act of Seeing with One's Own Eyes (*Brakhage*)
Happiness (*Dvortsevoy*)
Chung Kuo China (*Antonioni*)
Sans soleil (*Marker*)
Crossroads (*Conner*)

JAMES TOBACK

USA

F for Fake (*Welles*) Having called it my favourite film for many years, I was excited to read Welles himself refer to it as "the only original movie I've made since *Citizen Kane*".
The Goldberg Variations (*Monsaingeon*) Filmed and recorded shortly before Glenn Gould's tragic death, the film unites two of music history's heroic figures and transports us – to borrow one of Gould's phrases – into a realm of "beatific felicity".
Hotel Terminus (*Ophüls*) A great, rough, rich epic work of cinematic pursuit

that leaves one with the frustration of having been robbed of the joy of murdering Klaus Barbie personally. Haunting in every regard.
Baseball (*Burns*) This is 20th-century American history dramatically and poetically rendered through the classic American sport.
Jim Brown: All American (*Lee*) An unsparing celebration of the most fascinating and complex American athlete of the 20th century with the best and most unexpected 'happy' ending in movie history.
The Fog of War (*Morris*) A tortured portrait of the crumbling man most responsible for grinding America into and through the most significant and permanently staining military misadventures in its history.
Z Channel: A Magnificent Obsession (*Cassavetes*) A thrilling survey of great films through an exploration of the ground-breaking Los Angeles-based movie channel and its tragic creator.
Grizzly Man (*Herzog*) The most seductive and relentless cinematic portrayal of man's doomed desire to communicate with non-human animals.
Seduced and Abandoned (*Toback*) False modesty has always been lost on me. Since the necessary – if not sufficient – cause for distinction in a film is that it not resemble any other film, *Seduced and Abandoned* becomes an instant candidate for inclusion.
The Story of the Jews (*Bahaire & Kirby*) Simon Schama seamlessly weaves himself into the narrative in a miniseries written, photographed, edited and delivered with a perfect balance of passion and intellect.

HELENA TRESTIKOVA

Czech Republic

Man with a Movie Camera (*Vertov*)
Enthusiasm (*Vertov*)
Nanook of the North (*Flaherty*)
La Seine a rencontré Paris (*Ivens*)
Crisis (*Kline*)
Chronicle of a Summer (*Rouch & Morin*)
Night and Fog (*Resnais*)
Le Joli Mai (*Marker & Lhomme*)
Nejvetsi Prani (*Spáta*)
Prague: The Restless Heart of Europe (*Chytilová*)

ANDREI UJICA

Romania

Shoah (*Lanzmann*) The film with the highest documentary value ever.
Man of Aran (*Flaherty*) Emerson and Melville go cinema.
Man with a Movie Camera (*Vertov*) The peak of modernity reached by "the perfect electric man".
The Fall of the Romanov Dynasty (*Shub*) The invention of 'syntactic filmmaking', formerly known as found footage, compilation or montage film.
Histoire(s) du Cinéma (*Godard*) The cine-Montaigne.
Diary 1973-83 (*Perlov*) The cine-Pepys.
Welfare (*Wiseman*) AKA 'Preface to the American Comedy'.

Having called *F for Fake* my favourite film for many years, I was excited to read Welles himself refer to it as 'the only original movie I've made since Citizen Kane'

James Toback

Dont Look Back (*Pennebaker*) How does it feel? Like a rolling stone.
Seasons (*Pelechian*) Not a frame too short, not a frame too long.
The Quince Tree Sun (*Erice*) Cinema's primary lesson on the relations between physical and pictorial reality.
● "Documentary is a clumsy description, but let it stand," wrote John Grierson in 1932, and we have settled for this placeholder word for 'nonfiction film' too easily – in fact until it has become useless.

If fiction and nonfiction are the two halves of cinema, we can ask which is the left and which the right side, or in other words, which is the 'female' and which the 'male'? But this is where our problem becomes visible: we actually distinguish between 'female' and 'male', not between 'female' and 'non-female'. Thus one half of cinema is still lacking an affirmative name, which condemns it to a bastard condition.

I propose *Sight & Sound* launches a contest to finally discover a term that could serve as a proper description for this kind of filmmaking. It would be joyous if we could conduct this late baptism before the 100th anniversary of *Nanook of the North*.

I was locked in to a very patronising view of oppressed Iranian women. *Divorce Iranian Style* showed me women getting the better of their husbands

Penny Woolcock

PETER VON BAGH

Finland/Italy

One Sixth of the Earth (*Vertov*)
Land Without Bread (*Buñuel*)
Listen to Britain (*Jennings & McAllister*)
The Battle of Midway (*Ford*)
Le Sang des bêtes (*Franju*)
Notes on a News Item (*Visconti*)
Les Maîtres fous (*Rouch*)
Night and Fog (*Resnais*)
Le Joli Mai (*Marker & Lhomme*)
Point of Order (*De Antonio*)
● This list goes far back in time... Not, however, because the times were better then for documentary. Brilliant documentaries are made all the time, and – contrary to the case of new fiction – they often match the early achievements of the genre (as if there were one – documentary is more versatile than fiction). They are often just hard to see and find, and the consensus of earlier days is lacking.

I simply wanted to bring back to my memory titles that made an enormous impact on me, once upon a time.

LUCY WALKER

UK

The Up series (*Apted & Almond*)
Hoop Dreams (*James*)
Waste Land (*Walker*)
Fast, Cheap & Out of Control (*Morris*)
Streetwise (*Bell*)
Powers of Ten (*Charles & Ray Eames*)
The Crash Reel (*Walker*)
The Five Obstructions (*Leth & von Trier*)
On the Bowery (*Rogosin*)
Hotel Terminus (*Ophüls*)

PETER WINTONICK

Canada

[*The late Wintonick compiled this list for our 2012 Greatest Films of All Time poll. R.I.P.*]
Enthusiasm (*Vertov*) Although *Man with a Movie Camera* deserves to be on everyone's list, this homage to miners and farmers is a prototype 'sound documentary'.
Triumph of the Will (*Riefenstahl*) Horror-prop.
Primary (*Drew*)
The War Game (*Watkins*)
In the Year of the Pig (*De Antonio*) I would suffer in purgatory with him if I left my late, great mentor off the list.
The Hour of the Furnaces (*Getino & Solanas*) *Sight & Sound* called it "the paradigm of revolutionary activist cinema".
Sans soleil (*Marker*)
Shoah (*Lanzmann*) Essential.
Roger & Me (*Moore*) The film that launched 1,000 quips by the investigative sceptic.
Darwin's Nightmare (*Sauper*) The implications of a species of fish wrongly introduced into Lake Victoria in Tanzania.
● Here are my top ten significant films of all time. My 11th is *¡Vivan las Antipodas!* (*Kossakovsky*) – a masterpiece by documentary's Rembrandt.

Of course, they are all documentaries, or hybrids. I could've included fiction, because essentially all fiction films are the most simple documentaries... what else do fiction filmmakers do but 'document' or 'record' performances with actors? Whereas documentaries find ecstatic truth by pretending to be real.

PENNY WOOLCOCK

UK

The Hour of the Furnaces (*Getino & Solanas*) Technically inventive and fiercely political. The world literally never looked the same to me again after I'd seen it.
Divorce Iranian Style (*Longinotto & Mir-Hosseini*) Like all the best films this one really messes with your head. I was locked into a very patronising view of oppressed Iranian women submitting humbly to a patriarchal culture. Longinotto's film introduced me to women who in many cases were getting the better of their pathetic husbands.
Four Hours in Mai Lai (*Sim*) Sometimes innovation is unnecessary – talking heads can be utterly compelling.
The Act of Killing (*Oppenheimer, Cynn & anonymous*) This film is about the perpetrators of genocide. It's uncomfortable viewing, but so it should be. This is us whether we like it or not.
The House I Live In (*Jarecki*) The mass incarceration of the underclass, including disproportionate numbers of young black men, is an epic travesty of justice. This film is a clarion call to action.
The Betrayed (*Gordon*) The Russian invasion of Chechnya – a group of Russian mothers desperately searching for their missing sons, young soldiers tear around in tanks like a band of brigands, drunken soldiers chuck grenades into cellars full of women and children. They are all 'the betrayed'.
Don't Get High on Your Own Supply (*Regan*) Regan follows a friend's descent into heroin addiction with a clear eye. A moral quagmire for sure and a fantastic film.
Grey Gardens (*Maysles brothers, Hovde & Meyer*) All the horrors and the voyeuristic pleasures of documentary are in this film.
The Revolution Will Not Be Televised (*Bartley & O'Briain*) Two Irish filmmakers were making a film about Hugo Chavez when there was an attempted coup. They were brave and light-footed enough to change direction and follow the messiness of what happened next.
Collateral Murder – Wikileaks (*US military*) This piece of film put Bradley/Chelsea Manning in jail – footage shot from a US Apache helicopter on a mission over Bagdad. Raw and truthful.
● Even the purest observational documentaries reflect the filmmaker – we choose who and what interests us, where we place the camera, what shots to juxtapose and what survives the final edit. In some ways they are more deceitful and full of lies than fiction. But they can also pack a punch, take your breath away and actually change the world. What else is art for?

Dogwoof congratulates the following films, shortlisted in both the Sight & Sound Critics' and Filmmakers' Documentary Poll

AVAILABLE ON DVD, BLU-RAY AND ONLINE

dogwoof Celebrating 10 Years

THE NEW JOURNALISM

As traditional media back away from investigative reporting in the internet age, documentary filmmakers like Laura Poitras are stepping in to fill the gap – but can they survive without institutional cover?

By Charlotte Cook

Documentary is a constantly evolving artform. Despite ever-decreasing financial resources, it attracts some of the most innovative artists, interested in exploring the boundaries of construction, interpretation and perception to tell stories that compel them. However, this freedom to innovate requires an independence that's becoming more difficult to maintain.

In the UK, the groundbreaking investigative series *World in Action*, produced by Granada Television between 1963 and 1998, fostered a generation of filmmakers (from Michael Apted, through his work with the Up series, to Paul Greengrass) who advanced the craft of documentary in ways still felt today. But *World in Action* existed within a framework that offered training, artistic development and organisational security, an environment severely lacking in today's increasingly acquisition-focused media environment.

Over the last decade, while newspapers have been closing their investigative departments to cut costs, freelance documentary makers have moved to fill the void in long-form, long-lead investigative journalism. A scandal like Watergate, for instance, would nowadays be as likely to be uncovered by documentarians as by print media. The best case in point is Laura Poitras, with her trilogy-in-progress about the post-9/11 world and its 'war on terror'.

Poitras began this trilogy with *My Country, My Country* (2006), the result of eight months of on-the-ground research and filming in Iraq, which looked at the US occupation through the eyes of Iraqi doctor and Sunni political candidate Dr Riyadh al-Adhadh. Then came *The Oath* (2010), which tells the dual stories of Abu Jandal, Osama bin Laden's former bodyguard, and Salim Hamdan, bin Laden's driver, who spent years as a prisoner in Guantanamo Bay. Both films gave an insight into contemporary issues while retaining a window on human experience, and were released to much critical acclaim. *My Country, My Country* was nominated for an Oscar; after its release, however, Poitras found herself repeatedly stopped and interrogated at the US border by Department of Homeland Security agents, who would confiscate her equipment and copy her notebooks.

For the final part of her trilogy, Poitras began to develop a film about the implications of the war on terror domestically, and government's increasing powers of surveillance. In her short *The Program* (2012), William Binney, an NSA agent turned whistleblower, describes a top-secret domestic spying programme called Stellar Wind that was introduced after 9/11. In January 2013 Poitras received an email from an anonymous source who had seen *The Program* on the *New York Times*' Op-Doc site. This source was Edward Snowden.

In June that year Poitras flew to Hong Kong with journalists Glenn Greenwald and Ewen MacAskill and made the *Guardian* interview that introduced the world to Snowden. Like Greenwald, Poitras is not shy of adversarial work and has maintained a high degree of integrity while protecting both herself and her sources, as Snowden had surmised.

Poitras's work straddles different methods of storytelling and ways for audiences to engage with information. Unprecedentedly, she helped two newspapers, the *Guardian* and the *Washington Post*, to a pair of Pulitzer Prizes this year for breaking the news of the Snowden disclosures, but she remains dedicated primarily to the visual medium and filmmaking in particular (she studied with the experimental film master Ernie Gehr at the San Francisco Art Institute, and then at New York's New School for Public Engagement), and has also chosen to support other filmmakers working in this area. She recently executive-produced

EYEVINE (c) KOBAL COLLECTION (c)

Johanna Hamilton's *1971* (about a break-in by activists at an FBI office at the height of the Vietnam War that revealed unconscionable levels of snooping), Iva Radivojevic's *Evaporating Borders* (about mass immigration across the Mediterranean, focusing on Cyprus) and Ra'anan Alexandrowicz's *The Law in These Parts* (concerning the unique legal framework imposed by Israel on the Occupied Territories).

Speaking about the importance of film, Poitras says: "It completely transforms how we understand the world. There are historical events that people wouldn't know about if it weren't for having a visual record. I always cite the story of the Abu Ghraib scandal, where the *New York Times* did a very short written piece saying there was an investigation looking into military police in Baghdad and that was January 2004. Then the photographs came out three or four months later, and the level of outrage and shock felt globally was because we had visual documentation of the abuses. Visual journalism can capture reality in a way that print can't. It's crucial to understand the human impact of war or violence and it opens us up to a whole different space in which you can document reality and communicate to people."

As journalism and filmmaking overlap, the pressure grows for filmmakers to deliver their films faster as part of the dialogue and framework of the news cycle. This undercuts what draws many filmmakers to cinema in the first place – the opportunity to add context, narrative and nuance. "It's a bit of a trap... to be chasing news," says Poitras. "It's not going to stand up over time. That's something I'm definitely confronting now [with]

ENEMY OF THE STATE Laura Poitras (above), one of the new generation of investigative filmmakers, has faced aggressive scrutiny from the US Department of Homeland Security since making her 2006 film about the aftermath of the Iraq War, *My Country, My Country* (left)

Films are a way to communicate something about the world, not tools to drive change. Long-form journalism shouldn't be there to serve an agenda

I don't think we spend as much time as we do on documentaries [just] to break news. There has to be something greater that we're trying to communicate, to do with universal issues."

Beyond the exigencies of the news cycle, documentarians who work in a journalistic vein also struggle with the formal constraints and editorial pressures applied to a medium that thrives on independence and fluidity. In recent years, the majority of funding has been focused on social-issue filmmaking, creating a financial pressure to engage in a campaigning approach.

"Maybe I'm a bit old school", says Poitras, "but I think films are a way to communicate something about the world, not tools to drive change. That's not to say I don't have opinions about the things I'm documenting, but it's not a means to an end. Long-form journalism shouldn't be there to serve an agenda, but that doesn't mean that it doesn't inform... Anything that's well done has a range of contradictory ideas and represents a spectrum of human experience, and that doesn't always fit in to a 'message'."

The breadth of the visions filmmakers are contributing to our collective understanding of the world owes much to independent methods of working. Yet this very independence can put filmmakers in legal difficulty. Without the organisational support a media company can offer, they find themselves vulnerable to harassment by powerful state and non-state actors alike. Poitras, for one, is likely to find that her print bylines offer her greater protection than her film work.

In 2012 the renowned filmmaker Ken Burns, along with his daughter Sarah and her husband David McMahon, directed *The Central Park Five*, which explores the story of five young men wrongfully convicted of the assault and rape of a female jogger in New York Central Park in 1989. The convictions were set aside in 2002 and the film explores the case and the men's experiences up to the present day.

In 2003 three of the exonerated men filed a lawsuit against the City of New York, and the film's production company was subpoenaed for access to all of its footage, including the rushes. This followed in the footsteps of a case in which filmmaker Joe Berlinger had been ordered by a US judge to turn over to the Chevron corporation all 600 hours of footage he had obtained for his film *Crude* (2009).

Burns and his team saw this as a chance to change the precedent. "We realised that this might be the time to stand up and say, 'Fuck you', which is what we did, and I'm really glad we did," he says. "The courts ruled twice in our favour, both directly and on appeal, and so we're pleased that this might replace the old, scary precedent. We hope our case will prevail in terms of shield laws, not only within documentary but extending to reporters as well."

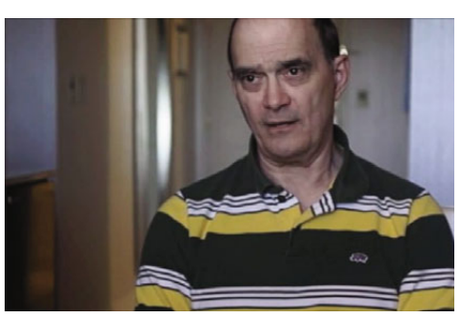
In the Burns case, the prosecution questioned at what point journalism took place, and therefore whether the information was protected by US shield laws (designed to protect journalists from government attempts to gain access to confidential information and sources). This is a tricky area for filmmakers. Documentary stories develop over time, and the definitions of the craft can come back to bite them.

"You have photojournalists who go to conflict zones," says Poitras, "and what they're doing is every bit as much journalism as those people working in print. If their work gets subpoenaed it should be protected in the same ways as print journalism. The same goes for documentary. I'm working with sources who have ongoing investigations and any government asking for my material, I'm not going to provide it, full stop. That should be protected and documentary filmmakers should take that very seriously."

Burns elaborates on a future vision for the legal position of, and protection for, documentary filmmaking. "We need an equivalent of a PEN [the international writers' association recognised by the United Nations] for documentary filmmakers that would look after their artistic interests – particularly for those who wish to be free from journalistic constraints but also, and more specifically and urgently, for those filmmakers who may not have the resources when it really matters most," he says. And if, in the eyes of the law, the lines of filmmaking and journalism blur or combine: "I like the idea that the act of journalism is the focus, not necessarily the process."

***My Country, My Country* and *The Oath* are available on DVD and VOD from Dogwoof**

NEW WORLD ORDER
Laura Poitras's *The Oath* (above) tells the dual stories of Osama bin Laden's former driver and bodyguard, while her short *The Program* (below) explores domestic surveillance undertaken by the NSA

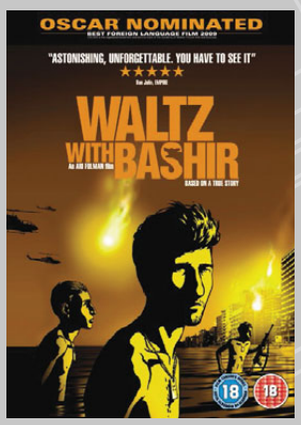


KOBAL COLLECTION (2)

Artificial Eye

artificial-eye.com

Best Sellers



Ari Folman

Waltz with Bashir

One of the most visually dazzling, strikingly original and stunningly realised films about war ever made. Based on the true story of director Ari Folman, an Israeli army veteran who realises he can remember nothing about the 1982 Lebanon War in which he fought.

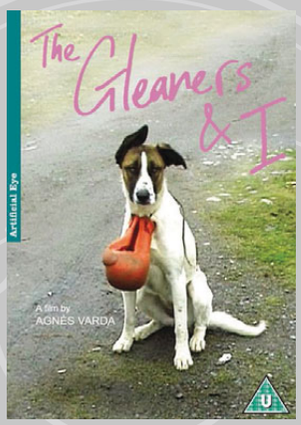
OUT NOW ON DVD & BLU-RAY

Nicolas Philibert

Etre et Avoir

Nicolas Philibert's award-winning documentary that charts the events within a small single-class village primary school in the Auvergne region of France over the course of one academic year.

OUT NOW ON DVD & BLU-RAY



Agnès Varda

The Gleaners and I

Fascinating documentary in which director Agnès Varda travelled the French countryside and the markets of Paris to study the lives of a collection of foragers and scavengers called The Gleaners.

OUT NOW ON DVD

Order now at amazon.co.uk

Free Super-saver Delivery and Unlimited Free One-day Delivery with Amazon Prime are available. Terms and conditions apply. See www.amazon.co.uk for details.

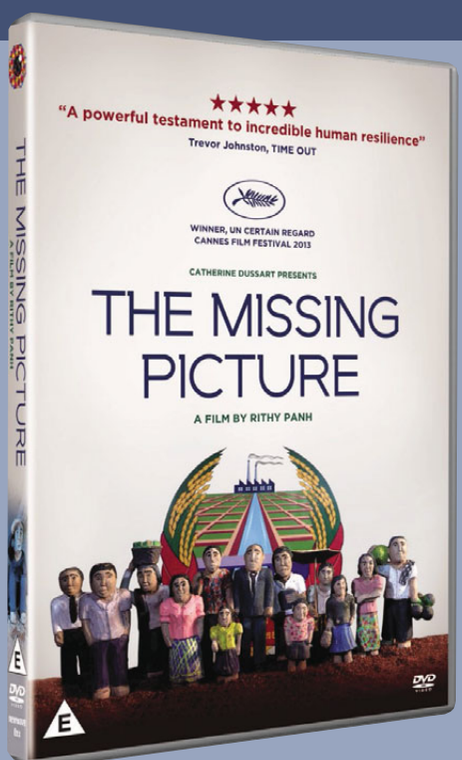
new wave *films*

★★★★★
'Panh's remarkable new documentary works as a survivor's testament, a film about memory and loss… Subtle, discreet and sensitive.'
Geoffrey Macnab, The Independent

★★★★★
'An achingly sad, personal film about an inhumanity almost beyond imagining. Panh tells the story by splicing his own narration – which takes on the quality of a searing poem – with archival film…devastating.'
Jenny McCartney, The Sunday Telegraph

★★★★★
'Image by image, word by word, simplicities build the story of a true-life national tragedy… It engages, informs, moves, amazes, disturbs.'
Nigel Andrews, The Financial Times

★★★★
'I've never seen anything like this film… It's a meditation on individualism and poetry; the power of image to remind and exorcise; the ruthless zeal of revolution; the endurance of memory and family, and the human will to survive.'
Jason Solomons, The Mail on Sunday



The Missing Picture

Rithy Panh

Oscar nominated for Best Foreign Language film, Rithy Panh's latest adapts his memoir *The Elimination*, about his childhood when he and his family were expelled from Phnom Penh and deported to camps in the country by the Khmer Rouge, who took over Cambodia in 1975. Millions died from starvation, over-work or pure brutality. Rithy Panh was the only member of his family to survive.

With a brilliant visual coup, Panh recreates life under the Khmer Rouge using tiny, hand-painted figurines. This allows him to show, in a profoundly affecting way, the horror that could not otherwise be reconstructed in a conventional manner.

The Blu-ray and DVD come with the original French narration and an alternative English narration.

Available now on Blu-ray, DVD and download from iTunes, Google Play, Blinkbox and more

Order from amazon.co.uk

www.newwavefilms.co.uk

FLIGHTS OF REALITY

The past 15 years have seen a sea change in documentary culture: filmmakers have grown more boldly adventurous as audiences have woken to the possibilities of the art

By Robert Greene

Two artful nonfiction films reached cinemas, critics and audiences in 2013 and for many this felt like the crashing of a long-building tidal wave. Lucien Castaing-Taylor and Véréna Paravel's *Leviathan* and Joshua Oppenheimer's *The Act of Killing* (co-directed with multiple collaborators), two astonishing cinematic statements, each born from Harvard intellectuals with European ties, persuaded cinephiles and cultural gatekeepers everywhere that documentaries could stand on an artistic par with the most accomplished screen fiction.

The Act of Killing, essentially an experimental documentary with a groundbreaking mix of art and politics, made such a crossover commotion that it was nominated for an Oscar (and then screened for members of the US Senate Committee on Foreign Relations); *Leviathan* was widely hailed as an aesthetic and technological game-changer. Together they stood out in a great year for nonfiction, their successes proof of a shift in understanding of the form and sure evidence of a documentary golden age. Whether or not such hyperbole tickles one's fancy, and whether or not one even likes the films, it's pretty difficult to deny that something is happening in the world of documentary.

That 'something' was the emergence of a more cinematic brand of nonfiction filmmaking. Or you could describe it as a return to documentary's roots. Cinematic nonfiction as a mode might best be described as a harking-back to an era when creating films from captured realities wasn't solely about advancing a political cause or shedding light on a social injustice.

John Grierson (the guy who, of course, first coined the term 'documentary' in 1926) may have immediately associated the form with social concerns, but films that came later, such as *Super Size Me* (2004), *An Inconvenient Truth* (2006), *Waiting for 'Superman'* (2010) and Michael Moore's *oeuvre*, relied far too heavily on a particular brand of infotainment, which over-emphasised factoids, produced disposable images and relied on manipulative and maudlin editing techniques. Before these filmic 'reports' were pushed to the fore, helping to entrench in many minds ideas about what a documentary was supposed to be, filmmakers from Flaherty to Marker to Akerman to Benning to Guzmán to Wiseman to Kiarostami were busy creating bold, ambitious reality-based cinema.

Leviathan and *The Act of Killing*, then, were essentially throwbacks. This revolution in nonfiction, where filmmakers are unafraid to challenge the narrow-minded idea that documentaries function primarily as

journalistic reports, might best be understood as the awakening of an interested audience to what has long been a part of art cinema. The movement of these films from the fringes has been a movement by audiences and critics toward accepting heterodoxy, formal freedom and cross-pollination of fictional and nonfictional modes of storytelling.

Yet there is some newness to the new. Audiences have started to accept these films because they're being made and pushed by an increasingly emboldened batch of filmmakers, armed with cheap cameras and desktop editing systems, who are in turn having their work shown and written about like never before. As a documentary-maker myself, I identify strongly with the idea that narrative and art cinema can now be energetically and freely created out of captured realities and that our films can find interested audiences. Over the past 15 years, with radical technological and aesthetic shifts changing the way movies are conceived of and made, these ideas have erupted into a full-scale cinematic insurgency.

BEFORE THE REVOLUTION

The art of nonfiction lies within the dialectical tension between structure (directing, shooting, editing) and chaos (the haphazard serendipities of reality), and the history of movies is full of remarkable achievements in exploiting actuality. Proto-cinematic nonfiction could be found in many places. The Lumière brothers made structuralist observational cinema, Robert Flaherty intervened with Nanook to tell a better story and Luis Buñuel exposed the voice-of-god narrator as a closet imperialist in *Land Without Bread* (1933) even before it was a documentary cliché. Dziga Vertov found *pravda* in montage, Ichikawa Kon (*Tokyo Olympiad 1964*) found melodrama in human physicality, American hustlers performed canny versions of themselves in films from *Portrait of Jason* (1967) to *Streetwise* (1984), and Frederick Wiseman made more great works than perhaps any artist in history.

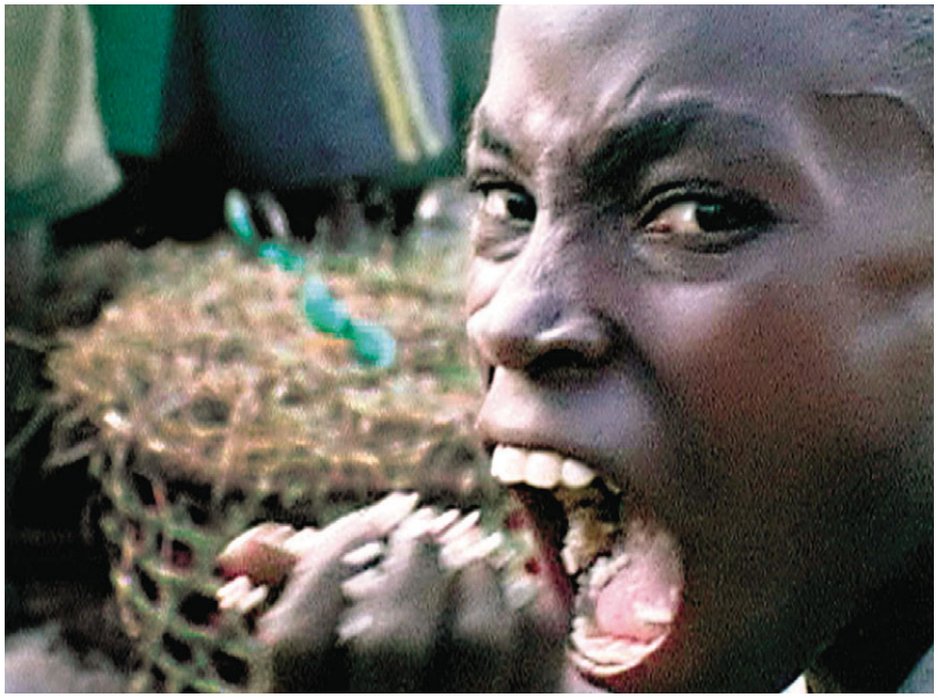
In 1992, MTV's *The Real World* took a genre born in Europe and began training younger viewers to understand the art of documentary performance – that reality fiction can be the most riveting, visceral form of storytelling. In 1994, Steve James made the video epic *Hoop Dreams*, proving audiences could flock without movie stars, leading to the occasionally recurring idea that documentaries could make people money. In 1995, Sony manufactured the DCR-VX1000, a three-chip digital video camera that produced a presentable image for pennies, turning a generation of filmmakers into documentarians.

In 1997, Werner Herzog released *Little Dieter Needs to Fly*, a film in which the title character opens and closes a door multiple times before walking into a house. He tells the camera/viewer that this tic is due to his traumatic experiences as a prisoner of war in Vietnam. Herzog staged the scene, unbeknown to the viewer (one would have to wait for the DVD commentary to find this out). It was an example of the 'ecstatic truth' idea that could be found in his films before and after *Dieter*, but was most vociferously articulated by the director whenever he had a documentary to promote. That same year the Danish Film Institute began funding films (they would go on to become a major funder of work such as *The Monastery: Mr. Vig and the Nun*, *Burma VJ: Reporting from a Closed Country*, *Armadillo*, *The Red Chapel* and *The Act of Killing*), while Abbas Kiarostami ended his Palme d'Or-winning fiction classic *Taste of Cherry* with self-referential video footage of him and his crew that played like a trip to documentary heaven.

THE YEAR DV BROKE

The year 1998 began with future Hollywood director Todd Phillips and fellow New York University Film School *enfant terrible* Andrew Gurland sharing a Grand

TRUE STORIES Lucien Castaing-Taylor and Véréna Paravel's *Leviathan* (above left) and Joshua Oppenheimer's *The Act of Killing* (above) represented a high watermark for cinematic nonfiction, riding a wave whose currents can be traced back to Bennett Miller's 1998 *The Cruise* (left)



STATE OF PLAY
Hubert Sauper's *Darwin's Nightmare* (above) and (below, from left) Wang Bing's *West of the Tracks*, Clio Barnard's *The Arbor* and Banksy's *Exit Through the Gift Shop*

Jury documentary prize at Sundance with their darkly comedic exposé *Frat House*. By the end of the year, funder and would-be broadcaster HBO had buried the film amid charges that Phillips and Gurland had staged scenes of hazing and debauchery in the film's final act. Although the exact nature of the offences was never entirely cleared up, the debates the film stirred about the combustible nature of 'truth' in nonfiction continue to resonate today.

Later that year, another future Hollywood auteur took a VX2000 (Sony's next-generation model), a gift for visual storytelling and an indelible screen presence, in New York tour bus guide Timothy 'Speed' Levitch, and made a lo-fi landmark. Bennett Miller's *The Cruise* was at turns funny, emotional, warmly populist and formally unique. Like Phillips, Miller simply wanted to make movies and documentary was just one way to do it. He needn't think of his cinema as journalism.

From its Woody Allen-like mingling of comedy and poetics to its complex-yet-relatable depiction of character to Miller's embrace of the painterly black-and-white expressiveness of digital video, *The Cruise* revelled in its movie-ness. Most importantly, Miller presented a blueprint for a generation of Americans to go and pick up their own cheap cameras and follow their own cinematic impulses, ignoring old journalistic ideas about what makes a documentary. The technological breakthroughs had made big-screen dreams more achievable. *The Cruise* (which was transferred to 35mm film for its theatrical run) played in cinemas throughout the country. Apple's Final Cut Pro was released less than a year later. A new day had dawned.

AN ERA OF CINEMATIC AMBIGUITIES

Japanese director Kore-eda Hirokazu's *After Life* premiered alongside *The Cruise* at the 1998 Toronto International Film Festival and the film's meditative, self-referential story – about lost souls creating filmed versions of their happiest memories to relive for eternity – had what might be considered a nonfiction way of seeing. The next year, Chris Smith's *American Movie* , about the making of a horror short, became a sensation by embracing nonfiction performance and collaboration between subjects and filmmaker. Also in 1999, *The Blair Witch Project* made many millions of dollars by taking the reality valence of the digital video image and using it to scare the shit out of everyone. My aunt still claims it was real.

Then, at the beginning of the new millennium, two breakthrough films from emerging international auteurs made an indelible impact on world cinema. Both intermingled fiction and nonfiction with a rigour, austerity and cinematic freedom that, when considered together, felt liberating and revitalising.

The Portuguese director Pedro Costa's *In Vanda's Room* (his first film shot on digital video) played at the Locarno Film Festival in 2000 and was almost immediately recognised as a towering achievement. Costa's ascetic style, built on impossibly dark observational images of drug addicts in the outskirts of Lisbon, obliterated the already fragile line between *cinéma verité* and art cinema through its duration and uncompromising purpose. The film might have been called a 'docufiction', but the truth was that the boundaries between real and staged were so thoroughly interwoven that the old question of what was fact no longer seemed relevant.

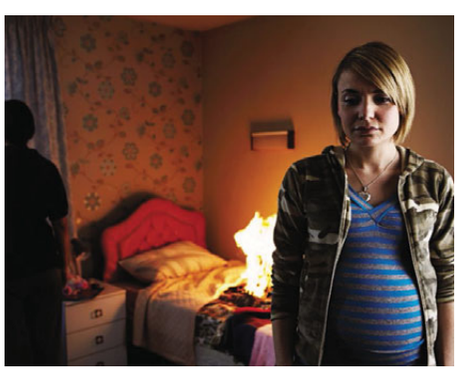
The next year, the Argentinian Lisandro Alonso's feature debut *La libertad*, a subtle, beguiling portrait of a young woodcutter, which formally hints at performance, self-awareness and drama just beneath its observational surface, played at Cannes and helped introduce nonfiction into the emerging New Argentine Cinema. These

two cinematic feats, along with other films such as Apichatpong Weerasethakul's international breakthrough *Mysterious Object at Noon* and José Luis Guerín's overlooked *En construcción*, revelled in ambiguity, mystery and experimental narrative energies, pushing considerably past fiction/nonfiction orthodoxies.

In March 2002 Adam Curtis's series *The Century of the Self* first aired on BBC Four, and in September 2003 Thom Andersen's *Los Angeles Plays Itself* and Mark Achbar and Jennifer Abbott's *The Corporation* both premiered in Toronto, winning a new audience for the essay film. That December Panasonic released the AG-DVX100, a cheap mini-DV camera that offered a uniquely cinematic image at 23.98 frames per second, indistinguishably close to the frame rate at which Jean-Luc Godard once found cinematic truth. This camera would go on to be a staple for documentary filmmakers from James Longley (*Iraq in Fragments*, 2006) to the Ross brothers (*Tchoupitoulas*, 2012) to myself.

Wang Bing made the nine-hour epic *West of the Tracks* (*Tiexi Qu*) in 2003 and the international film community began to recognise an emergent Chinese nonfiction movement that would give us works as varied as Liu Jiayin's *Oxhide* films and Huang Weikai's *Disorder*. Austrian cinema, from which Ulrich Seidl had made waves with such genre-defying actualities as *Models* in 1999, found itself in the centre of the cinematic nonfiction universe in 2004-05 when a trio of triumphs arrived: Hubert Sauper's *Darwin's Nightmare*, Michael Glawogger's *Workingman's Death* and Nikolaus Geyrhalter's *Our Daily Bread*.

By the time Werner Herzog had a surprising hit with *Grizzly Man* in 2005, the depth of vital work being seen internationally had turned his oft-repeated 'ecstatic truth' maxim (which was, in essence, a highly quotable defence of meddling with reality in order to create cinema) from esoteric director-speak to a practically mainstream idea. Films that broke documentary's old rules could now get funding and distribution, at least in Europe and other parts of the world, or when one's last name was Herzog.



FESTIVALS AND AMERICAN FRONTIERS

The Danish Film Institute held its first CPH:DOX festival in 2003 and the True/False Film Fest came the next year. The former would eventually give its top documentary prize to Harmony Korine's decidedly fictional *Trash Humpers* (2009), and the latter would grow from a tiny festival to international prominence on the idea that exploring the line between fact and fiction could be a curatorial mission. By 2006, older festivals such as Locarno, DOK Leipzig, IDFA, Hot Docs, Full Frame, Berlinale Forum, Sheffield Doc/Fest, Karlovy Vary and newer ones such as FIDMarseille, BAFICI and Ambulante had created a network for filmmakers, critics and viewers that could serve as everything from incubator of ideas to de facto distributor for some of the more formally inventive films. This interconnected subculture remains a vital part of what has blossomed into a full-blown documentary community today.

Internationally, ambitious nonfiction films were being financed and seen, with the institutional support of funders and festivals yielding work as amazingly varied as Pirjo Honkasalo's *The 3 Rooms of Melancholia*, Gianfranco Rosi's *Below Sea Level*, Andrei Ujica's *The Autobiography of Nicolae Ceausescu*, Clio Barnard's *The Arbor* and Michelangelo Frammartino's *Le quattro volte*. But in the US, where very little comparable support existed, individuals and groups were forced to find other ways to make an impact and get the more original, expressive work seen.

In 2007, as festival culture was beginning to become what we understand it to be today, Lucien Castaing-Taylor (and others) quietly helped pool the resources of Harvard to start the Sensory Ethnography Lab, which has become a subgenre of its own with films like Castaing-Taylor and Ilisa Barbash's *Sweetgrass*, Stephanie Spray and Pacho Velez's *Manakamana* and, of course, *Leviathan*.

We are no longer living in a world dominated by documentary orthodoxy; experimentation with fiction/nonfiction ambiguities is now common practice

The SXSW Film Festival established itself around this time as *the* showcase for American nonfiction, awarding its top documentary prize to some of the era's best films, including Jennifer Venditti's *Billy the Kid* in 2007, Bill and Turner Ross's *45365* in 2009 and Jeff Malmberg's *Marwencol* in 2010. In Austin and elsewhere, a collection of ambitious Americans, seemingly taking the pick-up-your-camera-and-make-something baton from Bennett Miller and others, began to be recognised as the leaders of a new generation.

Perceiving a discrepancy between what was happening in nonfiction and what was admitted by the broader, entrenched film world, A.J. Schnack (who had made his own cinematic statements with films such as *Kurt Cobain: About a Son*) helped to launch the annual Cinema Eye Honors in 2008 to celebrate the craft of documentary. In 2011, the top award was given to the elusive British artist Banksy's *Exit Through the Gift Shop*, a film that caused a veritable commotion with its playful sense of the movability of truth in cinema.

Laura Poitras was by now making densely cinematic works of high-narrative journalism such as *My Country, My Country* and *The Oath*. Margaret Brown's *The Order of Myths* was every bit as perceptive and beguiling as *La libertad*. Films like Jessica Oreck's *Beetle Queen Conquers Tokyo* and Michael Palmieri and Donal Mosher's *October Country* became festival darlings because they actively fought against trends of infotainment to which American documentary audiences had gotten so accustomed. In 2012, Jason Tippet and Elizabeth Mims made a sweet, seemingly simple but uniquely cinematic film called *Only the Young* that won over cinephiles everywhere.

Cinematic nonfiction had arrived in America and now it seemed like a bona fide movement. The twin successes of *The Act of Killing* and *Leviathan*, two films whose cultural DNA could be seen as mixtures of American and international materials, legitimised the idea that we are no longer living in a world dominated by documentary orthodoxy. Storytellers and artists now routinely view nonfiction as a viable way to express themselves; experimentation with fiction/nonfiction ambiguities is now common practice. Simple reportage is dead, formal play is in and audiences are watching, with an eye to what has happened over the past 15 years, to see what comes next.

This article was written with the help and input of Chris Boeckmann. An essay film by Robert Greene exploring the history of cinematic nonfiction can be viewed at bfi.org.uk/sightandsound

THE DAM BUSTERS

A trio of green activists find themselves in deep water after plotting to blow up a dam in Kelly Reichardt's environmental thriller 'Night Moves'. The director discusses the meaning of radicalism and the dangers of ironcast moral certainties

Interview by David Jenkins, with an introduction by Nick James

GETTY IMAGES (1)

BOMB SQUAD
Dena (Dakota Fanning), Josh (Jesse Eisenberg) and Harmon (Peter Sarsgaard) in the explosives-laden boat they plan to use to blow up a dam in *Night Moves (below)* from Kelly Reichardt (left)

A dam makes an apposite symbol in Kelly Reichardt's *Night Moves*. On the runoff side is political action, while character is withheld deep on the other side, all of its force held back. At the film's beginning, as Josh (Jesse Eisenberg) and Dena (Dakota Fanning) walk up and down the viewing platform of a dam on Oregon's Santiam River, we learn that they are ecological activists who would like to destroy the facility because it kills so many salmon, "just so you can run your iPod all day". We can see the ideology that binds the edgy idealistic girl to the focused loner boy, but their relationship to each other is harder to fathom. Are they together for reasons other than politics? Maybe, but what you notice is that it's a pact of mutual misapprehension.

The film divides itself into two moods – resolute action followed by the slow playing out of paranoid consequences – either side of a spectacular act of supposedly harm-free violence. Of course, that's a contradiction in terms that no amount of idealism can credibly sustain. Dena is the semi-rebellious child of a wealthy family who's slumming it by working at a health spa – well-connected enough to borrow the money to buy 'Night Moves', the speedboat they need to pack with explosive material for their raid on the dam – while Josh is a disaffected city kid working with cabbages on an organic farm. He has the kind of zealous neurotic certainty that people often mistake for high intelligence; she has a fraught perspicacity that leads her to question every detail of Josh's part of the plan, in what little chatter occurs in the film's first half – devoted as it is to a heist-like intensity of purpose.

They buy the boat and take it to meet with Harmon (Peter Sarsgaard), the more freewheeling third member of the mission, who lives in a mobile home and who, Josh explains, has been trained by the best there is, the United States Marine Corps, as an expert in explosives. But Harmon doesn't have the bomb's crucial ingredient: 500 lbs of ammonium nitrate (nitrogen-enriched fertiliser). It falls to Dena to acquire this from a farm products distributor, though she does not have the relevant permit. Here we see Fanning at her most complex as a performer, employing cunning and a put-on charm that might be natural to Dena's upbringing but is otherwise hidden.

It's part of the film's strategy that personality should sweat through – in the way, for instance, that Dena is able to relax with Harmon while Josh frets alone, or the way that debates about ecological matters happen around Josh at the farm. Josh doesn't need to take part; he's already made up his mind. It is also one of the film's great pleasures that this strong cast of three transmit so much just in the procedural business of moving stuff around, prepping the boat and creeping around in the dark.

For UK readers, the idea that someone might attack a dam because of what it does to fish need not seem far-fetched if we only recall the violent actions of the Animal Liberation Front. The film's bare-bones plot does bear a small resemblance to Edward Abbey's 1975 novel *The Monkey Wrench Gang*, a key green text, in which a party of four activists roams the US south-west attacking trains and bulldozers, while remaining fixated on destroying the Glen Canyon Dam. Blowing up a dam is certainly more dramatic than the arson attacks on trucks, condos and car dealerships that were typical of late-20th-century eco-warrior actions in the US, which were committed by members of such organisations as the Earth Liberation Front – and for which they often received unconscionably long jail sentences. But Josh's view is clear: "It's gotta be something big. People are gonna start thinking."

It's Josh that we're left with once the raid is over. Until this point the film has been a taut procedural thriller of a kind that matches such unlikely films as *The Guns of Navarone* (1961) for mission suspense and tension. Afterwards it morphs into a *noir*, which is not as abrupt a change as it might sound. The raid itself is all tyres on gravel, torchlight on water and fear in the shadows – fear of the one mistake that could ruin everything. "When we split up, we shouldn't talk," warns Harmon. "Yeah, no contact," says Josh, echoed by Dena. When each is isolated, though, they become prey to speculation, rumour and unforeseen consequences.

I confess that I found the micromanaged emotional weather of some of Reichardt's earlier films, such as *Old Joy* (2005) and *Wendy and Lucy* (2008), hard to warm to. Her facility with image-making and the oblique narrative strategies she and screenwriter Jon Raymond come up with are always excellent. It's more that I sometimes found the characters hard to credit – they always seemed implausibly helpless somehow. I had no such problem here. An adept of the telling psychological pause, Reichardt draws almost uncanny moments from Eisenberg and Fanning, and the sensitivity with which she places faces in landscapes is special. And, of course, Oregon makes a gorgeous natural backdrop of telling irony.

David Jenkins: Have you been personally party to the world depicted in *Night Moves*?

Kelly Reichardt: No. I'm not a joiner. Both Jon [Raymond, co-writer of *Night Moves*] and I are politically minded people and we both, I'm sure, did many a march before Iraq. He does canvassing. We'd go down to Occupy together. But we're more observers than anything.

DJ: Were the people you were observing quite young, like in the film?

KR: There's all kinds. Portland's Occupy was real messy. That's the thing that's fascinating about it. Who is the activist? The activist is the old hippy, the person who was homeless a week ago and now has a cause, someone who cares too much, someone who's mad at their parents and their parents' politics. You can't sum up the activist. Yet I'm totally guilty of saying, "Oh, the Tea Party are this and that." Are there shades of Tea Party people? Perhaps. It's hard to sum up. It's a big scene.

DJ: Is this film about that scene?

KR: No. We already had the script before Occupy had started up. But it was exciting for these things to be developing at the same time. It's exciting to see people get mad. My producer Neil Kopp is from the north-west US and he grew up with a friend who did something pretty radical and went to jail for a long time. It's easy to see why the history of environmental activism comes out of the north-west. You can see the forest disappearing. You have to stop your car so 15 minutes of train can go by with huge trees on the back. The whole salmon situation is very prominent there, with the dams keeping the salmon from being able to migrate. At some of them, like the one we shot at, they suck the fish up in a vacuum and spit them out into the back of a truck.

There's also all these places where the entire environment has been transformed for the sake of entertainment. Let's make this forest a reservoir so people can water-ski and fish. Most of those places do several things at once. People on the East Coast will say to me, "Why are they mad at a dam?" You don't have to explain that to anyone on the West Coast. Oregonians know their dams are sending electricity to California.

DJ: Even though all these political and contextual things are happening, you chose not to push them to the fore.

KR: No, because you can't show anything the characters wouldn't see. And you can't talk about it because they already know. That dam to them is symbolic anyway. It's not that dam that's problematic.

DJ: Could one talk about this movie as being about the repercussions of all actions we make in life?

KR: I can't direct the conversation after the movie. To me, it's this idea of radicalism. Blowing up a dam is radical, but it's not as radical as dumping millions of gallons of oil off the coast of Louisiana; or just the amount of fuel your average cruise liner lets out into the water. Chopping down an old-growth forest is radical. My characters are my characters. There's no message in this movie. But there are things that happen every day that we just take in our stride. Letting the glaciers melt is radical.

DJ: In the film's second act, the film zeroes in on Jesse Eisenberg's character. Why?

KR: That was always the conceit. Early, early on we were thinking about the character [of Raskolnikov] in *Crime and Punishment* and the idea of feeling that it's OK for you to take certain measures. It's about the danger of that mentality. It's true, why are we always following these

There's no message in this movie. But there are things that happen every day that we just take in our stride – like letting the glaciers melt

observing protagonists? I know that's a pain in the ass. It was always his film, but I guess that, afterwards, the absence of Dakota Fanning's character makes her into a much larger [psychological] presence.

DJ: As with all your movies since *Old Joy*, *Night Moves* was co-written with Jon Raymond. How has your relationship changed with him over the years?

KR: Well, he's a father now, so I've known him as he's gone through a really important period of his life. He had just moved in with his girlfriend when we first met. Yes, he's changed – now he's got responsibilities. We're very close. But we're not writing together any more. He's got a family to support – he can't be messing around with these little movies any more.

DJ: That's very upsetting.

KR: I know, right? You can come to my therapist with me. When we started off, we had a mutual friend in common – Todd Haynes. I had read Jon's novel, *The Half-Life*, and I got in touch. I still have the first email he ever sent me. I asked him if he had any short stories and he was like, "Here's this – good luck!" He didn't expect anything to come of it, so I could add what I wanted and change what I wanted. With *Wendy and Lucy* he was more invested and we came up with that storyline together. Anyway, he wrote the short story and before he'd even finished I started writing a script. Then he took the ending of the script and added it to the short story. Then we made *Meek's Cutoff*, which was just after he had put out a book of short stories, *Livability*. In that case he didn't feel like writing a short story, so he just wrote a script – a lovely script, but much harder for me because I didn't have my usual way into it. I went out there to the Oregon plains, lived there over the summer and we did a lot of research together. Then he was off. He was much more private about the writing.

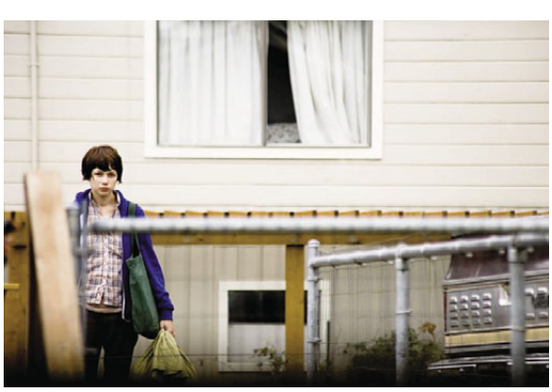
DJ: Is the title *Night Moves* a homage to Arthur Penn's 1975 film?

KR: It's funny, as no one in the states knows about the original *Night Moves*. Really. But the Bob Seger song is huge. Neil Kopp has a little sailboat and we were picking his brain for names of boats and that one just worked on so many levels. It was always going to be the temporary title, then it just became that. Penn's *Night Moves* was actually shot in the Florida Keys near to where I was growing up. Little-known story: the guy who owned the property where they were shooting, he was Gram Parsons's roadie, the one who stole his body and burned it. And he got arrested for it while they were shooting the movie. I heard Arthur Penn telling that story, and I thought, "Wow!"

GREEN INFERNO
Dakota Fanning (left) and Jesse Eisenberg (above) as the dangerously misguided idealists Dena and Josh in *Night Moves*

***Night Moves* is released in UK cinemas on 29 August and is reviewed on page 98**

THE OUTSIDERS
Kelly Reichardt often explores misfits alienated from the mainstream, like the characters Michelle Williams plays in *Wendy and Lucy* (right) and *Meek's Cutoff* (far right)



POETRY IN MOTION

In 1963, as the auteurists were claiming ascendancy in the UK, critic Raymond Durgnat was swimming against the tide in the pages of 'Motion' magazine, helping transform film culture his own way with his far-sighted advocacy of films such as 'Peeping Tom' and 'Black Sunday'

By Henry K. Miller

No war broke out, nor was there an economic crash or general election, but 1963 has long been regarded as a watershed in modern British history. Above all it was the year of the Profumo scandal, which, as Richard Davenport-Hines argues in *An English Affair*, "sounded a death-knell to the confidence of traditional hierarchical authority". Echoing this theme, it was a year that began with de Gaulle's rejection of Britain's application to join the Common Market and ended with the granting of independence to Kenya, one of the last major acts of decolonisation. It was also the year Beatlemania arrived and, partly because of Profumo, the peak of the satire boom.

Well-covered though this territory is, however, few if any of the histories devote space to the overlapping argument that could be made for 1963 as an epoch in film culture, both in Britain and the US. In that realm it was the year the auteurists won. There too traditional hierarchical authority – ie *Sight and Sound* – was challenged, primarily by the Francophile critics of *Movie*. Three years earlier, in the autumn of 1960, *S&S*'s editor Penelope Houston had responded to the *Cahiers du Cinéma*-fuelled fervour of the same critics, who were then writing for the undergraduate magazine *Oxford Opinion*, with a long article which, among more reasonable points, accused the young cinephiles of using art as "something for kicks" and screen violence as a "handy stimulant".

The controversy had broken in to the national press, and the *Oxford Opinion* writers had discovered that they had friends, notably in New York, where Andrew Sarris was waging a parallel war in the pages of *Film Culture* and the *New York Film Bulletin*. The most materially important ally, however, was probably Nicholas Luard, a university friend of Peter Cook who had used an inheritance to found the Establishment Club in 1961, and who began to publish *Movie*, as well as the fledgling *Private Eye*, in the spring of 1962.

The high point of Anglo-American Hitchcocko-Hawksianism came a year later. The spring of 1963 saw the opening of the Museum of Modern Art's six-month-long Hitchcock retrospective, organised by Peter Bogdanovich, the appearance of Sarris's special 'American Directors' issue of *Film Culture*, the basis for his 1968 book *The American Cinema*, and the publication in San Francisco's *Film Quarterly* of Pauline Kael's brilliant critique of auteurism, 'Circles and Squares'. In London that spring, *Movie*, which numbered Sarris and Bogdanovich among its contributors, was actually being edited out of the Establishment Club, which was directly underneath the studio that produced the best-known image of Christine Keeler, published in the *Sunday Mirror* that June.

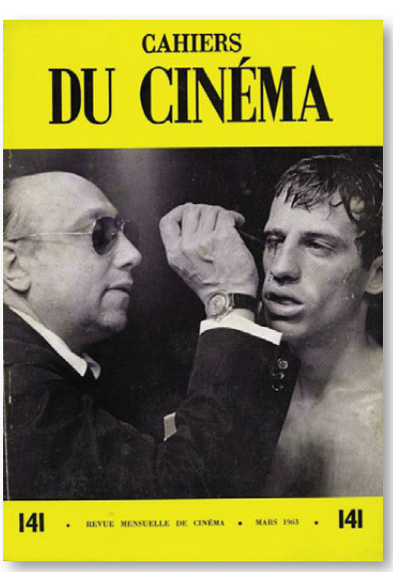
Time plays tricks with perspective, however. Things that were thought to have gone for good have come back to life; what was once vital is now exhausted. The emergence of Lord Home as prime minister, after Harold Macmillan's resignation in the wake of Profumo, orchestrated by the 'magic circle' of Etonians who dominated their party, was instantly and for decades thought absurdly anachronistic – not quite so today. Conversely British 'satire' long ago lost its bite. The case of *Movie* is different. It was fated to be backward-looking because the Hollywood system in which its favourites had flourished was in decline. The cover of the July-August 1963 *Movie*, the last for two years – Luard having gone bankrupt – was a still from the era-ending *Cleopatra*, released that summer.

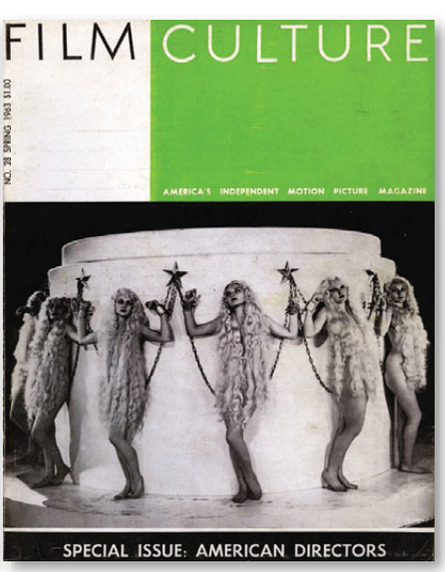
Apart from this, there is another story to tell about 1963, about another magazine, equally attuned to its times and resonating at least as much with the present. *Motion* first appeared in the summer of 1961, when its editor Ian Johnson was still a student at the LSE, before *Movie* but as part of the same general tumult. It had, at least in theory, a reciprocal distribution deal with the *New York Film Bulletin*. Whereas *Movie* was modishly laid out and printed using the latest offset litho process, *Motion*, Johnson recalls, had to use the "limited, old and sometimes battered typeface" of the cheapest hot-metal printer he could find. It had a print-run of 5,000, just over half that of *Movie*, a considerable figure given its lack of distribution muscle.

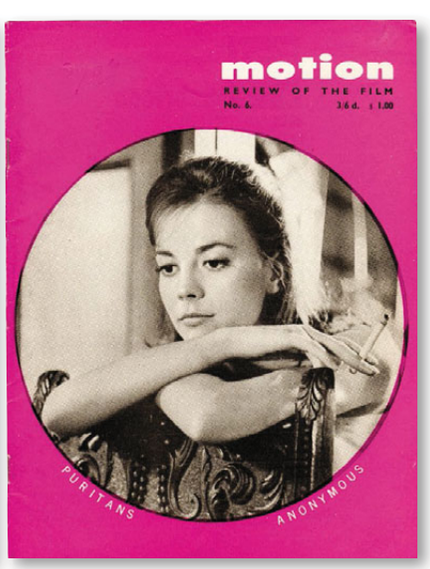
Like most such magazines, it didn't pay and relied upon enthusiastic recent graduates for contributions; however, it also attracted the slightly older and better-established Raymond Durgnat, who as Johnson says "was always looking for outlets for his prolific writings". Durgnat's main outlet was *Films and Filming*, a monthly magazine of which there is no equivalent today. Part of a stable of titles – *Books and Bookmen*, *Dance and Dancers*, etc – founded by the eccentric Philip Dosse, it was slightly shambolic and became somewhat sleazy; yet it published some excellent work. Notably, as Justin Bengry has written, "among those who knew and could decode the magazine's multiple voices", it courted "Britain's pre-decriminalisation homosexual community".

Durgnat's first *Motion* contribution was a close reading of Aldrich's *Kiss Me Deadly* (1955), pleas-

THROUGH A GLASS DARKLY
While *Cahiers du Cinéma* (right) dismissed Michael Powell's *Peeping Tom* (above) as 'totally platitudinous', Raymond Durgnat was an early advocate of the film in *Motion* magazine (far right), inadvertently helping in the auteur-isation of the director, despite his coolness towards the auteur theories propounded in the likes of *Film Culture* (right, centre)







BFI NATIONAL ARCHIVE (1)/RONALD GRANT ARCHIVE (2)

OUT WITH THE OLD
Durgnat wrote for the 'slightly shambolic and somewhat sleazy' *Films and Filming* (right), but fell out with *Sight & Sound* (far right) over its traditionalism. His maverick tendencies were given free rein in the 'Companion to Violence and Sadism in the Cinema' in *Motion* (below right), a magazine whose shoestring aesthetic lay in sharp contrast to the modish design of *Movie* (below left)

ingly titled 'The Apotheosis of Va-Va-Voom', in the spring of 1962. The same issue promised from the same author a 40-page '*Motion* Monograph' on the French New Wave for the summer. Covering 34 directors from Jean Gabriel Albicocco to Henri Zaphiratos, *Nouvelle Vague: The First Decade* appeared, more than double the planned length, in February 1963. Its highlights include a section on Jean Rouch and Edgar Morin's *Chronicle of a Summer* (1961), written as a *Chronicle of a Summer*-style interview between Durgnat and the directors.

During its gestation Durgnat and Johnson, working out of Durgnat's parents' home in Chingford, also compiled the magazine's crowning achievement, a 'Companion to Violence and Sadism in the Cinema', accurately described by *Films and Filming* as a "directory to the world's most nasty pictures". Starting with an entry on Mario Bava's banned-in-Britain *Black Sunday* (1960) – whose star Barbara Steele stared out of the cover – it dealt with such topics as 'Crustacea, Death by', 'Famous Movie Scars' and 'Leather'. There were longer articles on Georges Franju (by Peter Cowie, author of a *Motion* Monograph on Bergman), Science Fiction (by Philip Strick, who had written one on Antonioni), and the B western (by Chris Wicking, who later wrote a number of Hammer horror films, which he considered "the British equivalent of westerns").

The 'Companion' was a celebration of everything that official film culture had excluded; while provocative, it was quite serious. Ray Connolly, who went on to write *That'll Be the Day* (1973) – an evocation of pre-Beatles British youth culture that includes a clip from *Horrors of the Black Museum* (1959), a film discussed by Durgnat and Johnson under the heading 'My Eyes, No, Not My Eyes' – appended a bibliography to his entry on the 'Psychology of Aggression', invoking Freud, Melanie Klein and others. The preface, meanwhile, comprised a series of citations testifying to the prevalence of violence in Western culture, leading up to Houston's trivialising comments on its use as a stimulant. One of Durgnat's inspirations was Mario Praz's *The Romantic Agony*, a catalogue of the erotic and morbid obsessions and archetypes that recurred throughout romantic and decadent literature. Thus he wrote, "There is no real horror without beauty, as Keats would have said if he could have beheld BLACK SUNDAY" (italics were a luxury *Motion* had to forgo).

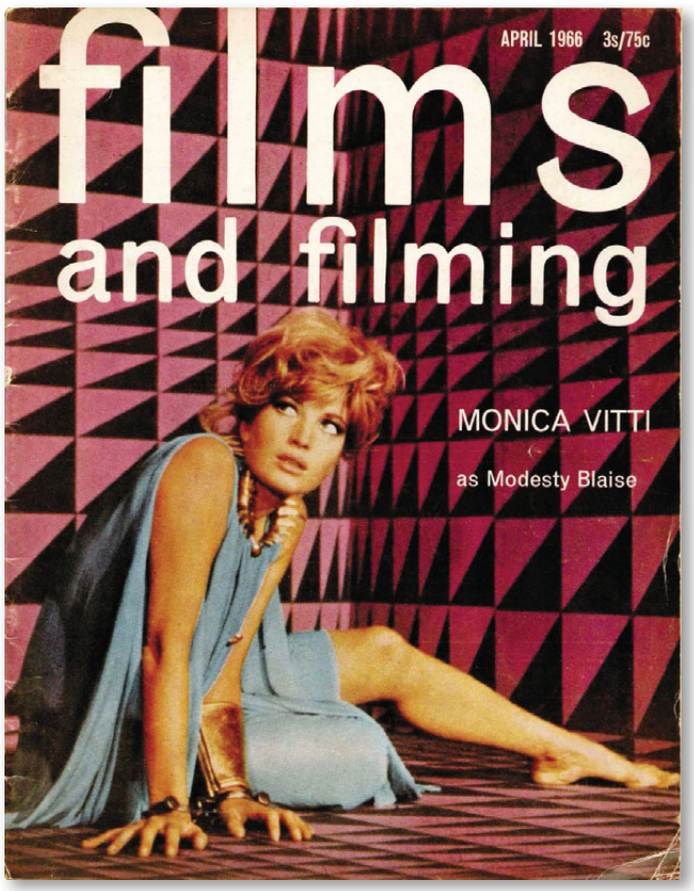
As well as its challenge to *S&S*, by picking out recurrent features in different films, regardless of director or even genre, *Motion* also swam against the auteurist tide. Despite *Nouvelle Vague*, Durgnat, who had more in common with Kael than he could admit, had no time for *Cahiers*-inspired auteurism; Connolly recalls seeing *Movie* as "arch rivals". And yet *Motion* played a major role in the auteur-isation of a filmmaker *Movie* thought merely "competent or ambitious" – Michael Powell – and in canonising a film *Cahiers* had dismissed as "totally platitudinous": *Peeping Tom* (1960). Johnson's entry 'A Pin to See the Peepshow' was the first article in English to treat the film with the seriousness it deserved. "As far as I know," says Johnson, "Ray and I were the only people who appreciated the film's values at that time."

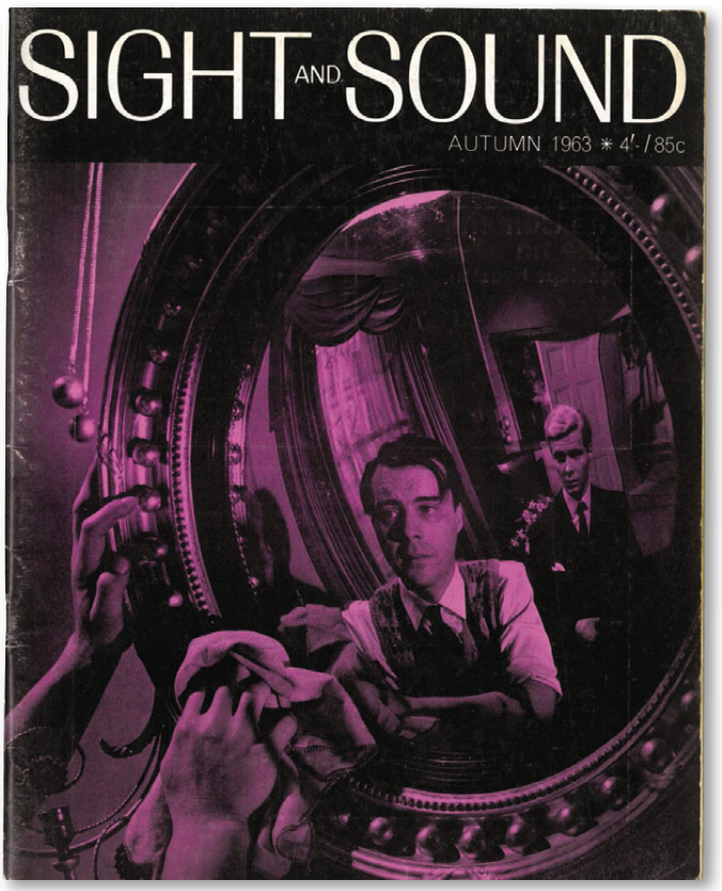
Durgnat had first discussed *Peeping Tom* in his *Films and Filming* series 'Erotism in Cinema', in which he argued, drawing on Morin's concept of 'projection-identification', that "People don't just *see* a film, they join in, identify, participate". 'Erotism' here was not defined in an exclusively sexual way, but rather as something underlying other affective responses: "large erotic elements, under all sorts of camouflages and metamorphoses, lurk, or rather loom, in entertainment", as he put it. "An essential part of films like *Psycho* and *Peeping Tom* is that the whole pattern of guilt, terror, suspicion, pity, hope-against-hope and so on, is brought into play." Later in 1963 he described seeing Powell's film with a regular audience, concentrating on the murder of Moira Shearer's character. "In a suburban cinema full of respectable suburban housewives this scene creates extraordinary audience electricity. The victim is so nice, her death morally so atrocious, yet we can't hate the killer because he's so much of a victim too, yet we *do* hate him – the auditorium is full of gasps, chuckles, screams; people physically writhe as they *empathise* with the victim." By disavowing these feelings, by divorcing the sensuous from the cerebral, the puritanical critical establishment had overlooked the film's complexity.

Issued, in tandem with *Nouvelle Vague*, in the month before the Profumo story broke and the release of The Beatles' first LP, the 'Companion' was, says Johnson, "our bestselling issue, especially in Soho". By coincidence, *Peeping Tom* was being revived by the men-only, members-only Compton Cinema, on Old Compton Street, at exactly the same moment. From March onwards London reverberated with rumours about establishment vice – '*le vice anglais*' very much included – spread not only by the Profumo affair, but by the Duke and Duchess of Argyll's divorce proceedings. On 30 April Durgnat presided over "an evening on violence in the cinema" at the ICA, titled 'The Art of Scaring You to Death'.

As an encore, Durgnat published in the next and final *Motion*, at the end of the summer, a direct attack on *S&S*, Free Cinema and related phenomena, titled 'Standing Up for Jesus' and advertised in *S&S* itself as "*Sight & Sound* exposed". Arguably the British (and left-wing) equivalent of Truffaut's 'A Certain Tendency in French Cinema', it exiled Durgnat from the BFI for almost two decades. Half a century on, however, with the BFI staging blockbuster gothic and sci-fi seasons, it appears that *Motion*'s moment has come. At the time it found its staunchest supporters across the Channel. In Paris *Peeping Tom* had won the admiration of *Cahiers*'s rivals at *Positif*, which had subse-

RONALD GRANT ARCHIVE (c)





quently spun off a cult magazine, *Midi-Minuit Fantastique*, named after the cinema where Powell's film had opened. Durgnat became its London correspondent, and would write his longest article on Powell for *Positif* in 1981. His first, in the autumn 1965 *Movie*, was a landmark in Powell's critical rediscovery.

Durgnat came to look back on 1963 as a watershed for other reasons. He later described Fellini's *8½*, which reached London at the end of August, making striking use of Barbara Steele's "art-school face", as "art-house cinema at its peak, i.e. its evolution, between 1958 and 1963, (a) from social phenomenological realism to explorations of mental process and subjectivity, and (b) from predominantly dramatic narratives to a modernist poetic". Elsewhere the same dates reappear as those of Marker's *Letter from Siberia* and Anger's *Scorpio Rising*, which he saw as having revived the long dormant art of intellectual montage. Both developments led away from the 'phenomenological realism' of André Bazin, which was premised on a "famous (and bizarre) comparison of photography to the Holy Shroud of Turin" and forbade montage as artificial. In Durgnat's contrary view photography was not essentially realistic, and film not essentially photographic. Affective and perceptual processes made it rather a matter of "images of the mind", prompted by any means available.

And for Durgnat the cinema of "mental images" and "sensuous contrasts" came to fruition in British cinema from 1963. November saw the West End opening of *The Servant*, later described by Durgnat as "a study of a whole culture's loss of purpose and therefore self-assurance", one month into the Douglas-Home premiership. The story of a dissolute aristocrat, "just back from Africa", and his undoing by a butler likened to a vampire and peeping Tom, it held up a distorting mirror to the year's events, even seeming to refer to the famous Keeler photograph. Losey had been championed both by *Movie* and by *Motion*: Robin Wood had written about *The Criminal* (aka *Concrete Jungle*, 1960) in the 'Companion', and Durgnat had called *The Damned*, produced by Hammer in 1961 and released without fanfare in May 1963, "one of the most important British films of the year, even, perhaps, of the 60s". But with *The Servant*, Durgnat wrote in 1966, "Losey's sensuousness reaches a climax".

Nor was Losey alone in this breakthrough. Other exponents of what amounted to a British new wave, most of them trained in television and associated at one point or another with the beat boom, included Richard Lester, who made *A Hard Day's Night* in the spring of 1964; Peter Watkins, whose BBC film *Culloden*, shown on BBC2 that December, applied the Rouch–Morin technique to 18th-century history; and perhaps above all Ken Russell, who made his first feature in the same year. Durgnat also included in this group John Boorman, apparently without knowing that Boorman had planted a copy of the *Motion* 'Companion' in the opening sequence of his 1964 BBC series *The Newcomers*, billed as a documentary but akin to and worthy of Fellini. Just as Bazin had theorised Italian neorealism in his time, so Durgnat would become the theorist of what he called the "Great British Phantasmagoria", born of the era's upheavals.

i ***The Essential Raymond Durgnat*, edited by Henry K. Miller and published by Palgrave Macmillan/BFI, will be launched at a *Sight & Sound* discussion event about Durgnat at BFI Southbank, London, on 5 September**

Durgnat's 'Companion to Violence and Sadism in the Cinema' dealt with such topics as 'Crustacea, Death by', 'Famous Movie Scars' and 'Leather'

PHOTOGRAPHY BY FABRIZIO MALTESE

WOMAN ON THE VERGE

Jean-Pierre and Luc Dardenne's tense redundancy drama 'Two Days, One Night' follows a factory worker's attempts to persuade her fellow employees to save her job. The directors discuss the creative benefits of not giving a damn and why they can never resist the lure of long takes

By Isabel Stevens

The Dardenne brothers treat the first moments of their films as interruptions. Indicative of their approach to cinema, these sudden immersions do little traditional establishing work, but render everyday lives in close up and mid-gesture, whether it's replacing a petrol nozzle (Igor in *La Promesse*); handing over money (*Lorna's Silence*) or rushing through a door (*Rosetta*).

The start of *Two Days, One Night* carries on this tradition, isolating the head of Sandra (Marion Cotillard) as she dozes on a sofa in the mid-afternoon while a mobile phone rings in the background. We naturally only hear one side of Sandra's subsequent conversation and it takes a few more scenes to gather that this is a tale about labour, knotty decisions and their seismic impact on people: Sandra is struggling with depression, has been off sick from work and has now lost her job at the solar panel factory in Seraing as the result of a ballot in which all bar two of her co-workers voted for a €1,000 bonus over keeping her in her role. Her friend Juliette convinces the company's owner to hold a fresh ballot on Monday morning as the last one has been unfairly influenced by their manager. Sandra, supported by her husband Manu, has the weekend of the film's title to visit her fellow workers and ask them to vote for her instead of their bonus.

How insurmountable a task this is for a person in such a fragile state as Sandra the Dardennes make clear, playing close attention to negative space – silences, Sandra's intakes of breath – as she knocks on front doors. "You must understand, the door of the apartment is where all the drama occurs" said Robert Bresson, a director the Dardennes have often cited as an influence. In this study of individualism and solidarity, doorways are not just loaded with suspense, but are the only spaces available to the brothers to sketch the people standing in them. Indeed *Two Days, One Night* makes you realise how regularly they figure in their films – remember Sonia hammering on her subletted front door at the start of *L'enfant*?

Working with renowned actors was something the brothers swore against doing after they lost control of their second feature *Je pense à vous* (1992). Cécile de France in 2011's *The Kid with a Bike* was the first star since then to be admitted into the Dardennes' world, normally populated by non-professionals, lesser-known actors or regulars who have grown up with the directors, such as Jérémie Renier. Cotillard is even better known and might at first appear incongruous in the brothers' suburban Seraing, but her subdued performance never draws attention to itself or preys on pity. With her tired eyes and hesitant body language, she adroitly captures Sandra's fluctuating moods, veering between despair, hopefulness and determination.

Isabel Stevens: Who came first, the character of Sandra or Marion Cotillard?

Luc Dardenne: The character. The screenplay, we talked about it and we started to write it at the beginning of 2000. We had heard about similar stories – well, situations, rather than stories – where people working for a company had been pushed to become very competitive with one another by their bosses, who

POWERS OF PERSUASION Marion Cotillard plays Sandra, a worker at a solar panel factory who has a single weekend to save her job, in *Two Days, One Night* (left) by Luc and Jean-Pierre Dardenne (above)

asked them to decide between their bonuses and the fact that a less-well-performing worker could be given the sack, and those workers voted to keep their own bonuses. That happened in France in the 1990s. And then later on there were other situations like this, in areas of Italy, the US and Belgium.

At that point, we tried to write a story. And it was always a woman as the protagonist, but we weren't thinking of Marion. It was a woman, and when she was going round visiting and talking to all her colleagues [she] met someone – a man or another woman, we played with the idea of both – and once we had come up with this meeting with another person, we couldn't continue, because we felt obliged to give this person their own story, and to tell a new story between them. And so the original idea got sidelined. We lost the essence of the story, the suspense that was linked to the vote, and to all these other people that she met, and the emphasis shifted to this new person. So we abandoned the idea.

IS: What made you return to it?

LD: There was the 2008 financial crisis in Europe and the US and it became a social crisis. And we said, "Well, what if this other person was her husband?" He will provide backstory, he's lived through her depression. He will let very concrete details surface, that are also very intimate, for example the fact that they don't make love any more. And at the same time he will also write a story of solidarity with her. He is going to help her, to be a little bit like her coach.

Once we had that idea in place, we were able to write the screenplay. And at that point, when we knew it was going to be a story of her and husband, that's when we thought of Marion Cotillard. Because we had met Marion the year before for another project, to do with a young doctor in the suburbs. We changed screenplays, and we went back to her in Paris and said, "Well we've had another idea, are you still interested?" And she said "Yes, absolutely, I like the story and I'd like to work with you." When we met her, the year before, there was a *coup de foudre cinematographique* between us. We wanted to film her. We *desired* to film her. That need lasted a year and a half, and when we started writing the screenplay that became the film, we had her in mind all the time.

We wanted to forget all Marion Cotillard's previous film and fashion associations – the glamour and all that. And I think she wanted that too

COLD COMFORT
Marion Cotillard's Sandra is consoled by her husband Manu, played by Fabrizio Rongione (below), and visits her co-workers (right) in a bid to win them over

IS: Did you research depression? The film offers a very realistic portrait of her vulnerable state of mind and her changing moods.

Jean-Pierre Dardenne: We have a friend who is a doctor and who we consulted a lot for the project about the doctor in the suburbs. She was our case consultant for this film and told us if things were realistic or not. Not just Sandra's state of mind, the highs and lows, but when she's in the hospital. It's great to come up with these screenplays, but first we need to know if they're realistic. And the film is realistic. The few hours that pass between her taking the Xanax and coming home from hospital are true to life, for example.

IS: This film has some similarities with *Rosetta* – it's also about a woman desperate to get a job.

LD: There are some similarities, yes. But Rosetta, the character, has a huge amount of energy, she's someone who absolutely has to work, and cannot see that there's someone who wants to help her. She wants a job and she will take his if necessary. It's that or death for her.

Sandra is completely different. She's tired, she has no energy. And she understands what the others are going through. She doesn't say, "I want to take your place" or "You've taken my place." She knows that these people have need of the money. She doesn't go to see them to accuse them of anything, to tell them that they're bad or selfish people. She goes to see them to try to persuade them to change their minds, even though she knows that it will be very difficult because they've already voted for the bonus. She's not there to judge, to condemn or to ask them to atone for their wrongs. She's not looking for a guilty party or someone to blame. On the contrary, we were careful to make sure that our Sandra retains a sense of solidarity with these people. Even if they say no, she understands. She's like them. She's one of them.

So she's a different woman to Rosetta in this regard. She's capable of putting herself in the place of another. Or at least she's capable of this by the end of the film. It's a constant refrain in the film, people are always saying to each other, "Put yourself in my place." Eventually she arrives at that place, quite unlike Rosetta, who's a good little soldier of capitalism. Rosetta is competing. Sandra, on the other hand, wants out of the competition. Her bosses have put her in competition and she says no. That's not to say that she's a political militant who's warning others about what's going on, but all the same – what she does, and the manner in which she does it, manages to defuse the competition and replace it with a form of solidarity.

IS: How did you develop the characters of her co-workers?

JPD: It took a while. It seemed important to make it clear in the film that these people really need that €1,000. That's the reason we meet them while they are working. What we thought about when coming up with their characters was mainly how they were going to arrive at their decision, how were they going explain it, and to justify their decision not to change their position – or to change it. And then we wanted to find a situation in life for each of them that was believable. To see someone who is a football coach for a youth team, for example – that's someone who is interested in others, who gives up their time to help young people – it gives definition to someone who naturally has to work, and who voted against her because he needs the money.

LD: What was important but also difficult for each actor who played one of these roles is that they had only three, four, five minutes...

IS: And you learn so much in a very small amount of time.

LD: We needed to bring their dilemma, their choice into existence. And to humanise these characters, so that the spectator doesn't just think they're bastards, but to do that in relationship to Sandra. It's tricky – it's the job! – and it's great too, but we had to build emotion in just four or five minutes, starting from nothing. It's important that these characters are memorable, they should live on in the viewer's mind for the duration of the film.

JPD: I just wanted to add in the same spirit that with these characters we didn't want to tell the story of an internal 'war of the poor' – the bosses put them in a difficult situation and then they turn on one another. On the contrary, they try continually to explain themselves. They try not to lie – there's an honesty to all these characters. Apart from one. And maybe Nadine, who doesn't respond. Why doesn't she speak up? She could have done. Maybe she doesn't dare say anything, maybe she's ashamed that she needs the money. But it's not really right, to not even respond. And the last person, Julien, he wants, really wants, to earn more money. But he says so.

IS: Did you rehearse a lot as you normally do? What conversations did you have with Marion Cotillard before shooting?

LD: We didn't talk much before. The first time when we met with Marion and the second when we started working together [laughs]. She did a lot though in terms of preparing for her part, things that she didn't tell us about. We went straight into rehearsal, and we rehearsed all the scenes in the film. We started with her on the most physical scenes – when she falls, when she picks herself up, when she comes down the stairs, when she goes back up again, when she rifles through her bag and so on. And at the same time we worked on her clothes. We tried different things. Pink, blue, green, red, jeans, shoes. And that's how she became Sandra.

By the time we finished rehearsals we'd found the right clothes, the right haircut... we kept it all very simple. We wanted to forget all her previous film and fashion associations – the glamour and all that. And I think she wanted that too. But it's not just because we all wanted it that it worked. It's due to rehearsal. It's a movement that takes hold of you: that time when everyone loses a few of their preconceptions, their defensiveness, and it takes you further than you expected. You don't need long, maybe just a day or two. But you really have to let yourself go: try this, try that, put on a couple of different costumes, different bags. To start with it's important to not give a damn: it might not work, but that doesn't matter, we'll give it a try. And that's how – finally – you find something.

IS: You've been working in a similar style for a long time now. How have you honed your filmmaking and did you approach this film differently in any way?

LD: We hope that even if the films are part of the same family that each one is different. Also, we haven't just used the same style over and over again. Each story should demand its own way of being told, of being filmed. Here for example it seemed to us that the camera should record Sandra, her movements, the scenes with her colleagues; that it should observe, let the suspense build and let Sandra live.

We realised too, over the course of rehearsals, that every scene, every encounter, should be a single take, because that best conveyed the scene's natural tension. There are a lot of long takes, admittedly. We can't get away from them. It's our destiny – the long take [laughs].

JPD: I don't know why we can't manage to edit, to use shot-reverse-shots. Except in the car. Even at the script-writing stage we try to note how we might shoot and it just says 'one take'.

LD: Sometimes though we say, OK, we need to get beyond this constant use of long takes and so one of us suggests trying something else and we try it, but the other one ends up saying, "Hmm, I feel like we've lost something".

JPD: It's harder to use long takes. And also you find something with them that you might not find otherwise.

LD: I know others feel differently, but we don't think of our cinema as naturalist, because when you see a long take you notice movements of bodies, attitudes that wouldn't have surfaced if you hadn't used one. Doing it this way you can modify things. So with the actors, for example, you can tell them, "Let's go over it. Stop there. Start again here." You find things, because our camera needs that too. It's not about forcing the action, or wringing something out it, it needs to breathe on its own, to have its own agility and suppleness. But you can perceive something – a way of sitting down, of getting up again – thanks to the use of the long take.

Translation by Catherine Wheatley

We realised every scene should be a single take because that best conveyed its natural tension. There are a lot of long takes, admittedly. It's our destiny

Two Days, One Night **is released in UK cinemas on 22 August and is reviewed on page 105**

PREVIEW

DIFFICULT PEOPLE

A new crop of truly independent young American cinema bristles with a defiance and hostility largely absent from the 'indie' scene

By Jason Anderson

When it comes to ready symbols of rage, it's hard to beat a Molotov cocktail. It therefore makes an appropriate accessory for Trevor, the would-be stand-up comic and increasingly avid pyromaniac at the centre of *Ape* (2012). Trevor's first action in Joel Potrykus's gleefully confrontational debut feature is to walk along a sunny residential street with a bottle in his hand, happily oblivious to the concerned look he attracts from a passerby. After arriving at an ordinary house and spray-painting 'FUNNY' on the driveway, he kicks open a gate, lights the rag and hurls his incendiary device into the backyard as the soundtrack delivers a blast of the heavy metal playing on Joel's headphones.

That the explosion is hardly the sumptuous eye candy of a CGI-saturated blockbuster hints at the grubbier nature of Potrykus's effort, shot on weekends in Grand Rapids, Michigan, on a reported budget of $2,000. But it's still a potent opening salvo for this example of a body of new American films bristling with defiance and hostility, ever scarcer qualities in an independent film community that largely foregoes prickliness.

Potrykus's firebug has a close kinship with the hapless and tightly wound protagonists of movies like Ronald Bronstein's *Frownland* (2007), Dustin Guy Defa's *Bad Fever* (2012) and Drew Tobia's *See You Next Tuesday* (2013). Most charitably described as difficult, these are people for whom even the most ordinary social interaction is suffused with the terror of failure and humiliation. Even when they're as loquacious as the squabbling siblings in Alex Ross Perry's *The Color Wheel* (2011), they seem determined to shred any possibility of human connection. These are misfits who may be as unlovable as they are unemployable; indeed, the grim circumstances of their working (or non-working) lives in an era of vastly diminished opportunities and expectations lends a sociopolitical aspect even to films as anarchic as *Ape*.

Their pain-filled misadventures are presented in an aptly rough-hewn visual style, often in the handheld 16mm format that's become a signature for Sean Price Williams, cinematographer for *Frownland* and Perry's films. They portray places that are unmistakably American and proudly unpicturesque, like the decayed, depopulated Michigan burgs inhabited by Potrykus's characters, or the drab Salt Lake City locales in *Bad Fever*. Just as striking is how the hipster wonderland of Brooklyn so eagerly romanticised by HBO series like *Girls* can seem so mean and desperate in Perry's movies and *See You Next Tuesday*.

Clearly, unrulier energies are emerging, even if it may be too late to hope for a wider revitalisation of US independent cinema. The community is now hobbled by ever-scarcer financing opportunities and the rising dominance of television, which has shed its *déclassé* reputation to become a haven for Todd Haynes, Steven Soderbergh and other former heroes of the Sundance set. Meanwhile, the slate of premieres every January in Park City is dominated by vehicles for stars hoping to get slightly edgier than studio executives normally tolerate and earnest social-issue dramas, with a little space left for the possibility of an arthouse-ready breakout in the vein of *Beasts of the Southern Wild*.

Set against a moribund status quo, the emergence of a brasher, more avowedly independent sensibility is encouraging. It's not so surprising that most of these titles remain largely unknown in the UK or Europe; they're marginal in their own country, where their circulation has been largely restricted to younger festivals like SXSW in Austin and others that dare to

These misfits' pain-filled misadventures are presented in rough-hewn style, portraying proudly unpicturesque places

Anxious comedy: *See You Next Tuesday* is mordantly funny even as its lead (Eleanore Pienta) veers from combative to catatonic

put 'underground' in their names and mean it. That said, Locarno has become an enthusiastic showcase: the latest edition's spotlight on new American cinema included international premieres for darkly hilarious new films by Potrykus (*Buzzard*) and Perry (*Listen Up Philip*).

Other recent features are strong and distinctive enough to inspire hope for a new generation of angry young Americans who regard independent filmmaking not as a route into the system but an opportunity to create challenging, sometimes decidedly audience-unfriendly work. And while the majority of them are male and white, there are thankfully some women among them, like Mary Bronstein (*Yeast*), the wife of *Frownland*'s director, and Eliza Hittman (*It Felt Like Love*).

If nothing else, the rising notes of anger and discontent stand in contrast to the milder modes preferred by the filmmakers who were initially associated with the mumblecore moment of the middle-aughts, such as Andrew Bujalski and Joe Swanberg. If there's any single point at which passive-aggressive shifted into straight-up aggressive, it was the SXSW debut of *Frownland*, which was memorably described by its creator as "a rotten egg lobbed with spazmo aim at the spotless surface of the silver screen". A New York projectionist who spent five years making the film, Ronald Bronstein demonstrates an oddly admirable dedication to the task of amplifying *Frownland*'s squirm-inducing qualities until the film becomes nearly unbearable. Dore Mann hardly seems any more comfortable in his lead performance as Keith, a sweaty, stuttering door-to-door salesman who flounders through a series of increasingly toxic exchanges with his vicious roommate and his emotionally distraught girlfriend. The film's fury is ameliorated by a sense of humour and a growing sympathy for Keith as he claws at the walls of an apartment so rank with the stench of alienation and agony it makes Henry's pad in *Eraserhead* (1976) feel like a new condo in Williamsburg.

Perhaps feeling understandably spent after the Herculean endeavour of writing, directing and editing such a merciless film, Bronstein has yet to direct another feature. But he makes an equally bracing effort in front of the camera in *Go Get Some Rosemary* (2009), a lighter-hearted effort by the New York sibling team of Josh and Bennie Safdie. Renamed *Daddy Longlegs* for its US release, the movie stars Bronstein as a highly strung projectionist whose hang-ups continually imperil his efforts to be a half-decent father for his two sons. *Frownland*'s shadow also falls over *Yeast* (2009), a wickedly acerbic and arguably even more discomfiting study of humans at their worst, starring and directed by Mary Bronstein.

Another portrait of a young adult whose frustrating behaviour seems to stem from a deep-seated rage and despair, *Bad Fever* depicts the travails of Eddie, a mumbling twentysomething slacker who shares Trevor's delusions about a promising stand-up comedy career. As played by Kentucker Audley – an actor and filmmaker whose own works are more firmly in the mumblecore mould – Eddie is far too cripplingly awkward and socially inept to pass for the kind of underdog-eccentric type more common in Sundance crowdpleasers. There's

Joel Potrykus's *Buzzard*

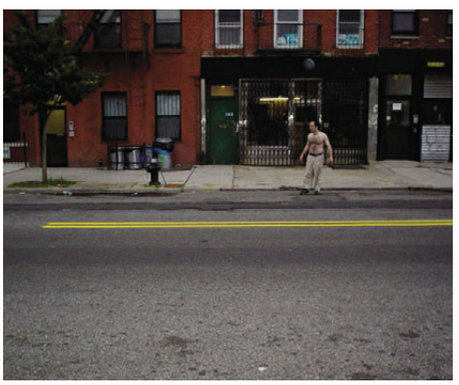
nothing quirky about a loneliness that feels so absolute and ultimately makes Defa's first feature as haunting as a Townes Van Zandt song.

As you might expect from a movie that cops its name from every delinquent's favourite coded epithet, *See You Next Tuesday* marks a bolder gesture by Drew Tobia, who earned a berth at last year's London Film Festival with his feature debut about a pregnant grocery-store clerk whose demeanour veers wildly between the combative and the catatonic. A busy New York stage actress and performance artist, Eleanore Pienta is hugely compelling regardless of whether a scene demands all her energy or none of it. (She'll next be seen in *7 Chinese Brothers*, a new comedy by Bob Byington, an Austin filmmaker whose *Somebody Up There Likes Me* debuted at SXSW in 2012 before winning a special jury prize at Locarno.)

It's worth mentioning that, however horrific they can seem, these films are largely intended to be funny. All their most cringe-inducing qualities – the awkward pauses in conversations, the shame-filled spluttering when words actually make it out of their mouths, the pathetic self-delusions that underpin and undermine the behaviour on display – owe much to the anxious brand of comedy that has become prevalent in the Cartoon Network's Adult Swim programming block and cult shows like *Childrens Hospital* (sic). Over the course of their own shows and sole feature-film effort, *Tim and Eric's Billion Dollar Movie* (2012), Tim Heidecker and Eric Wareheim have established themselves as the pre-eminent purveyors of discomfort. Yet the cruelty and misanthropy exhibited in Rick Alverson's *The Comedy* (2012) – a courageous if grotesque satire that stars Heidecker as a wealthy Brooklynite hipster so deadened by his apathy and ironic regard for the world that he feels free to abuse women, taxi drivers, African Americans and anyone else who is not like him – are too unnerving to elicit much in the way of laughter.

No such problem with the movies of Perry and Potrykus, the two canniest of this breed of American indie filmmakers, despite their very different approaches. As if to answer the critics who noted the influence of Philip Roth on the finely tuned carping that filled *The Color Wheel*, Perry delivers a ruthless evisceration of New York's literary world in his third and sharpest feature to date. *Listen Up Philip* stars Jason Schwartzman as Philip, an ambitious young novelist whose most solipsistic tendencies are exacerbated after he finds an eager mentor in Ike Zimmerman, a legendary Roth-like author played with great ferocity by Jonathan Pryce. The film's withering tone is accentuated by Eric Bogosian's narration, a device that allows Perry to continually shift the emphasis away from the self-serving and self-sabotaging excesses of the two writers and on to the perspective of the women they treat so thoughtlessly: Philip's photographer girlfriend Ashley (Elisabeth Moss) and Ike's daughter Melanie (Krysten Ritter). Shot in colour 16mm stock by Sean Price Williams, *Listen Up Philip* sees Perry draw deeply from an array of literary inspirations and New American Cinema reference points (Ashby, Mazursky, Nichols and May all get pride of place), but the film is too brisk and incisive to get mired in them.

Acquired for US distribution by Oscilloscope Laboratories before its SXSW debut in March, *Buzzard* marks a similar jump in confidence. Potrykus again casts his regular leading man Joshua Burge as a downwardly mobile wiseass with a taste for trouble. Here, he's Marty, an office temp who focuses his energy on committing a variety of scams and indulging in the customary preoccupations of youth: horror movies, video games, death metal and the creative use of junk food. But when a cheque fraud scheme lands him in more serious trouble, he first hides out in the basement of his sole friend (Potrykus in a marvellously gormless turn) before ending up in worsening circumstances. The result is a Rust Belt tragicomedy that's equal parts Bresson, Buñuel and *South Park* – and therefore qualifies as another Molotov cocktail tossed in the face of indie complacency.


Ronald Bronstein's *Frownland*

Alex Ross Perry's *The Color Wheel*

ELEMENTAL SPACE

Skeletal strings, mournful cellos and weighty silence – plus ambient noise – help stake out the terrain of westerns about characters adrift

By Frances Morgan

Cormac McCarthy's novel *Blood Meridian* describes a series of journeys by a gang of murderers and bounty hunters through the American South West and Mexican borders in the mid-1800s. Violent encounters of almost hallucinatory intensity occur between passages in which men find themselves alone in bleak landscapes, surveying "the rolling scrubland and the barren peppercorn hills and the mountains and the flat brush country and running plain beyond"; riding through nights where the moon is a "thin shell... capsized over jagged peaks".

It's not surprising that McCarthy's prose springs to mind when listening to the soundtrack of Thomas Arslan's film *Gold* (2013). Its composer, guitarist Dylan Carlson, has often spoken of his admiration for McCarthy's work, naming songs by his band, Earth, after opening lines from the chapters of *Blood Meridian* (*Tethered to the Polestar*, *Lens of Unrectified Night*). While always instrumental, Earth's music evokes McCarthy's sparse but rich prose, with lean electric guitar melodies unfolding slowly as if across vast expanses, vibrating in a heat-haze of tremolo and delay. The silence between notes is weighty, audible. Earth's first incarnation, in Seattle in the 1990s, was as a doom metal band whose live shows were notorious for intense volume and amplifier feedback and, while these elements are no longer always there in Carlson's music, their absence is felt as a kind of presence, a distant cloudbank that could roll in at any time.

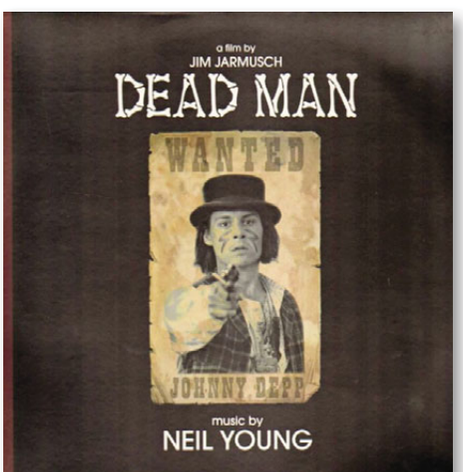
Recent iterations of the western such as *Gold* see characters similarly overwhelmed by their environment, confronted with human antagonists but mostly under threat from the terrain they are trying to claim or cross, and the impulses that have brought them there. *Gold* follows the fortunes of a small group of travellers in British Columbia in the 1880s, heading north to the Klondike region in search of untapped gold fields. They are strangers to one another and to their leader, Wilhelm Laser (Peter Kurth), an unscrupulous opportunist who has found a niche market in German immigrants seeking a guide who speaks their language. So the theme of alienation is compounded both within the group, and through the double foreignness they represent in their few encounters with Anglophone settlers and First Nations people. What Arslan shows as the group fragments is that this bonding through national identity and language means little in an inhospitable land that these visitors see purely as a resource to exploit for wealth and adventure.

The electric guitar as a staple of the western soundtrack was established with Morricone's score for *The Good, the Bad and the Ugly* (1966). The composer is said to have used this and other pop instruments as a pragmatic move, as there was no budget for a full orchestral score, but the anachronistic sound of the instrument – guitars weren't electrified until at least the 1920s – was a perfect fit for the 1960s spaghetti western, itself a self-aware update of the genre, and an acknowledgement of rock music's increasing standing as a 'sophisticated' music to be used for mood and atmosphere.

At the end of the world: Nina Hoss in Thomas Arslan's *Gold*

Gold's soundtrack, which Carlson has recently released as a standalone album under the name drcarslsonalbion, is superficially part of this lineage, but it has more in common with Neil Young's melancholy music for Jim Jarmusch's *Dead Man* (1995), which Earth's 2005 album *Hex; or Printing in the Infernal Method* also recalls, and the lyrical guitar of Daniel Fichelsher on Popol Vuh's soundtracks for *Heart of Glass* and *Aguirre, Wrath of God*. While these last are certainly not westerns, they are stories in which the natural environment is a character in its own right, a powerful and elemental force that exerts a strong occult pull over its inhabitants – or its guests, in the case of the doomed gold-hunters in *Aguirre*. The solo electric guitar stands in for the orchestra one expects to accompany such an epic story and its effect is at once to bring the narrative down to scale, to humanise the quest; and to add, via the uncanny sonics of electronic phenomena such as feedback, intimations of otherness, strange forces at work, a kind of animist quality in the trees, rocks, mountains and rivers. "You're at the end of the world", *Gold*'s heroine, Emily (Nina Hoss), is told by a post-office owner in a frontier town, and as the journey continues into endless forests and over glaciered mountains,

> *Sparse instrumentation mirrors directly the isolation and insignificance of these new inhabitants of North America*

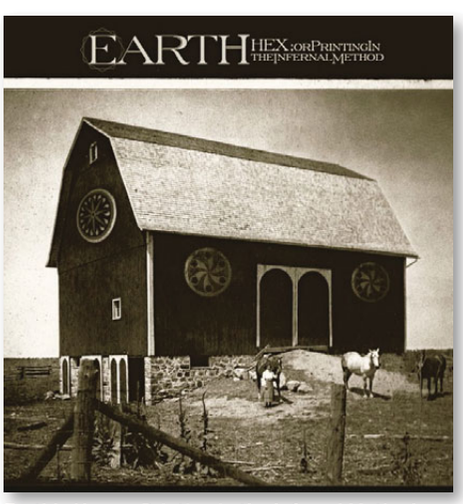


Neil Young's melancholy *Dead Man* soundtrack

Morricone's *The Good, the Bad and the Ugly* score

Carlson's guitar slides from lambent major-key melodies to more dissonant bent notes, his blues-informed structures becoming more abstract and ghostly; controlled feedback billows and keens behind the chords, and everything is tremulous as if disoriented with fatigue or hunger. The psychedelic aspect of the western that's hinted at in Sergio Leone or made explicit in Jodorowsky's *El topo* (1970) emerges here in the sound of amplified strings and volatile circuitry wired up to ancient, implacable vistas.

Such instability and strangeness also inform Jeff Grace's striking score for Kelly Reichardt's *Meek's Cutoff* (2010), another minimal western in which humans are pitted against a beautiful yet terrible space. Following a group of settlers crossing the Oregon desert in 1845, again under a misguided and possibly malicious leader, *Meek's Cutoff* is notable for the way the documentary-like portrayal of the quotidian hardship and tedium of such a journey opens out into striking, almost mythical images that convey its sublime aspects too. The sound and music contribute in no small part to this. Again, I'm reminded of Cormac McCarthy's evocation of the sound of a desert crossing, where all one can hear is "a dull thump of hooves and clank of gear and the constant light chink of harness". *Meek's Cutoff* does not hide these monotonous sounds, but Grace's skeletal string music steals in on them almost imperceptibly, building up into layers that hover and shift like dust clouds. The score is built around the mournful cello of Dave Eggar, who favours the high unearthly harmonics of the instrument, with Grace contributing prepared piano that chimes like a pendulum marking the rhythm of the desert's diurnal cycles. As in *Gold*, the sparseness of the instrumentation mirrors directly the isolation and insignificance of these new inhabitants of North America. Both films' central protagonists are women, coincidentally named Emily, whose strength is underrated by those around them; in *Meek's Cutoff*, Michelle Williams's capable Emily is literally excluded from conversations and decision-making, while Nina Hoss's Emily, a divorced, solitary woman, fascinates but is distrusted by most of her fellow travellers. The lonely, steely language of Eggar's cello or Carlson's guitar speaks for them, voicing both cosmic awe and wiry resolve.



Earth's *Hex; or Printing in the Infernal Method*

ILLUSTRATION BY MICK BROWNFIELD WWW.MICKBROWNFIELD.COM

PRIMAL SCREEN
THE WORLD OF SILENT CINEMA

Before *Emil and the Detectives*, Gerhard Lamprecht's 'moral films' unflinchingly showed Weimar-era degradation

By Bryony Dixon

For the decade or so after World War I, Germany – Berlin in particular – was a test-bed for morality in a rapidly changing world. Social attitudes had to respond to the massive industrialisation and urbanisation that made 19th-century moral structures seem increasingly irrelevant. Filmmakers like G.W. Pabst, Gerhard Lamprecht and Piel Jutzi took up these issues on a sliding scale of involvement, from concerned social comment to full-on propaganda. Recent restorations, programmes and DVD releases of Lamprecht's work are doing much to round out our view of this era of German cinema. The survival of the films is due in no small part to Lamprecht himself, who accumulated films and memorabilia from an early age and whose collection formed the core of the Deutsche Filmmuseum's archive after his death.

What surprises audiences today about the German *sittenfilm* (moral film) of the silent period is the extent of their frank portrayal of degradation. Prostitution, child abuse, alcoholism and merciless patriarchal double standards appear more frequently, and are examined more closely, than in other comparable national cinemas. Lamprecht, a Berliner to his core and steeped in street culture, took on the social ills of the capital with a surprising lack of melodrama or propagandising. His work focuses on the economic and social hardship suffered by Berlin in the Weimar era: high unemployment, overcrowded tenements and the hyperinflation of the early 1920s all added to the misery of an already oppressed underclass. In his 1925 film *Die Verrufenen* (*Slums of Berlin*), a middle-class engineer imprisoned for perjury finds that no one will employ him on release. Disowned by his family, he slips into poverty and is rescued on the point of suicide by a prostitute. An introductory intertitle explains: "Misery, poverty, vice and alcohol turn people into what's called the fifth estate, the people who can't escape their fate. A world of its own, which we attack rather than fix."

This seems to be Lamprecht's stance: to shed light on a social problem with a view to fixing it. He doesn't pull any punches making his argument. The downward trajectories taken by his characters into abjection are heartwrenching to watch. *Under the Lantern* (*Unter der Laterne*, 1928), which follows a nice young girl's descent into prostitution, is particularly hard-hitting. There's no redemptive happy ending, only a recurring jovial drinking song that becomes more horrible with each passing refrain. Revulsion at hypocrisy and brutality sits alongside the awareness that any amelioration experienced by the characters in these films comes from individual acts of kindness, not class action or political revolution.

Given the films' contents, one might think they were made under lenient censorship regulations. Not so. The Weimar regime's legendary Article 118, affirming that "no censorship will take place" had one exception: the cinema. As Thomas J. Saunders notes in *Hollywood in Berlin: American Cinema and Weimar Germany* (1994), "Controversies surrounding motion picture criticism were deeply rooted in contemporary uncertainty about how to accommodate the new medium… Contemporaries were awed by the whirlwind tempo at which casual amusement for the working classes became serious business and part of the nation's culture." The sexual explicitness of 'educational films' dealing with venereal disease and similar issues was the immediate excuse for censoring films, but nearly every filmmaking nation produced these in the post-war years. The more likely spur was anxiety about the undermining of political and professional institutions in the eyes of the working class; the debate around the Cinema Act even suggested the banning of films likely to foment class hatred (that is, advocacy of socialism), although this wasn't in the final guidelines.

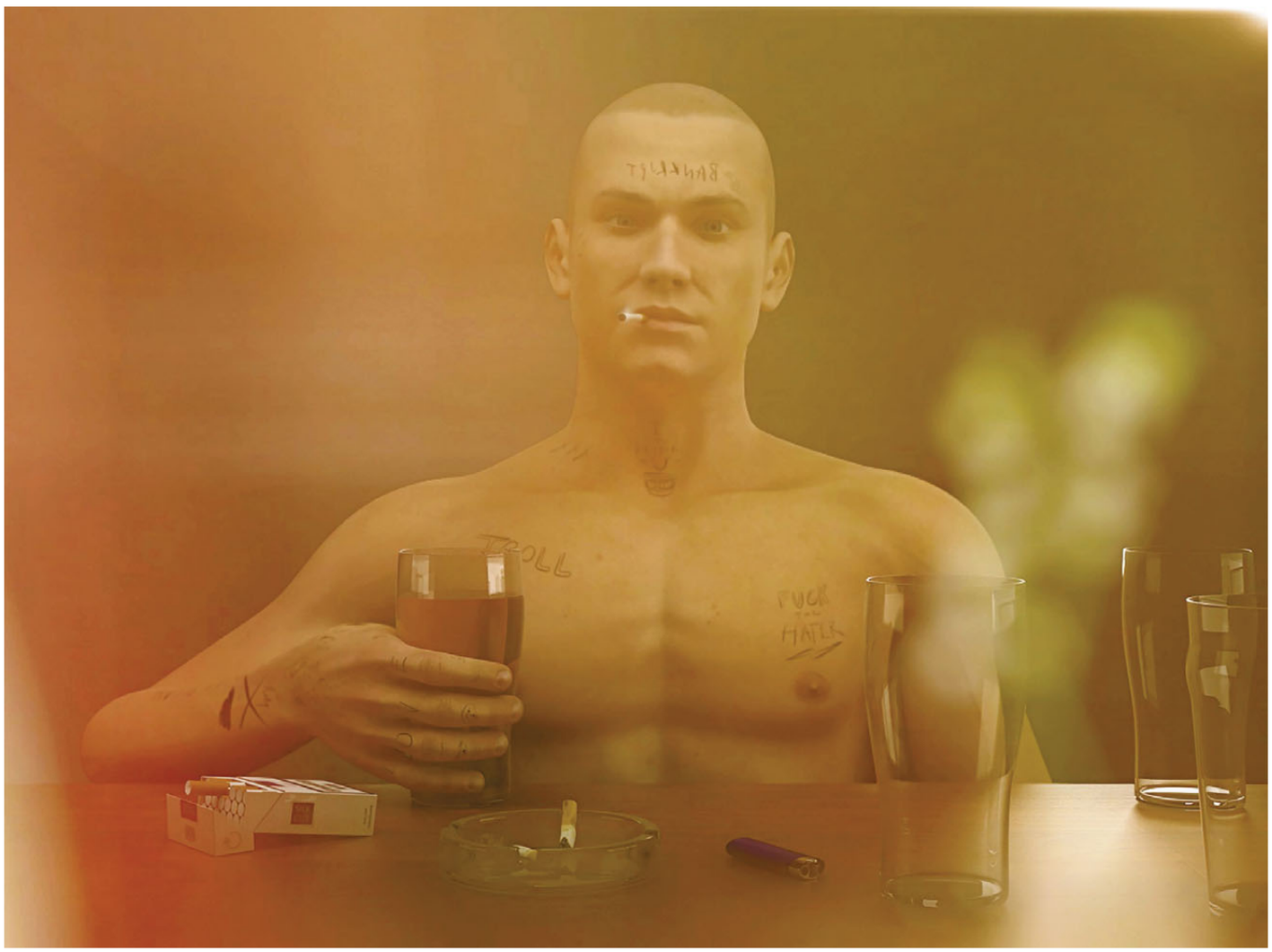
Heartwrenching: *Under the Lantern* (1928)

Prostitution, child abuse and alcoholism receive closer attention than in other national cinemas

Lamprecht moved on from this type of social drama as the depression bit and sound came in, but he stayed with his beloved Berlin for his greatest success: 1931's *Emil and the Detectives*, based on Erich Kästner's famous book, which sees the people – in this case a group of children – in effective control of the streets. Clearly, Lamprecht was never going to leave Berlin. He made it through the Nazi era producing uncontroversial genre dramas but returned to his favourite theme in 1946 with his 'rubble film' (made amid post-war ruins), *Somewhere in Berlin*. In this film, a group of children playing on the bomb sites of the city progress from re-enacting the war to helping, in their small way, to clear up the mess. Perhaps his survival of these turbulent years was due to the modest scale of his political message as well as the undoubted quality of his filmmaking, which, thanks to the German Archives, we can all now enjoy.

There will be a focus on Gerhard Lamprecht's films at the Cambridge Film Festival (28 August–7 September)

COLD NEW WORLD



Digital everyman: in *Ribbons*, the computer-generated central character engages in gestures of despair punctuated by moments of fantastical weirdness

Ed Atkins's increasingly fêted videos highlight the uncanniness of CGI creations while using digital technology against itself

By Melissa Gronlund

"Once upon a time," says the protagonist in Ed Atkins's *Warm, Warm, Warm Spring Mouths* (2013), "a couple of people were alive who were friends of mine. The weather... the weathers they lived in. Christ, the sun on those Saturdays..."

Since his first video projections in the late 2000s, Atkins has used a digital figure, whom he has referred to as a cadaver, as the centrepiece for his films. Often uncannily resembling the artist himself – and the uncanny is not incidental here – this figure ruminates on the intangibility of the digital world, conflating the artificial landscape of digital renderings with a loss of physical reality, even a kind of death. Reminiscent of the great British tradition of dystopian writing and cinema, Atkins looks back to a happier, almost bucolic time – "the sun on those Sundays", the "warm, warm, warm spring" – as his characters navigate the cold new. Indeed, his videos have become known and lauded in the art world for addressing something much of art has been remarkably slow to confront: the looming and all-transforming spectre of the digital world.

This summer, Atkins has filled the Serpentine Sackler Gallery, the new Zaha Hadid-designed wing up the road from the original Hyde Park gallery, with his digital creations in a conflagration of image and audio. His videos are marked by almost grotesquely lifelike special effects in the vein of video games; emotional soundtracks; references to spin and surface in the form of advertising and evangelical Christian logos; and complex and elaborate arguments articulated in voiceover. The digital world appears in Atkins's videos both as a landscape of special effects, in which his videos are sited, even trapped, and as a discursive possibility: a metaphor for unreality that his videos discuss. While *Warm, Warm, Warm Spring Mouths* mourns the lack of real weather, in *Us Dead Talk Love* (2012), a two-screen video installation first shown at the Chisenhale Gallery in London, two digitally rendered heads converse about an eyelash that has been stuck in a foreskin – an abject but beautiful amplification of the lost realities of being bodily and human, particularly in sex. Atkins uses the 'living dead' state of his cadaverous creations to reflect on the uncanniness of the digital world, in which one can exist as a body with no materiality in itself. His style echoes this uncanniness, with the slightly over-egged but generic realism of his figures. For many of his videos, Atkins models the figure on himself, quite literally: that is, he affixes the sensors that record the digital figure's movement to his body, so that the avatar's expressions are his own.

This autobiographical facet renders his videos particularly affective, despite their relentless push for artificiality and their cold CGI aesthetic. They are not only about death in a theoretical sense, but also about the mortality of man. The generalness of Atkins's video-game-like characters is not simply a nod to CGI figuration but a means of creating an everyman quality, which is underlined by the series of stock gestures they employ. In *Ribbons* (2014), the central character – an aggressive-looking, tattooed man – is constantly necking pints, letting cigarettes burn down dangerously low, knocking over whisky glasses or gripping them tightly; he is shown with his head on table-tops, face-planted or resting softly on his cheek. But even in the midst of these clichés of despair, digital weirdness seeps in: at one moment the character's head also frighteningly deflates,

like air being let out of a balloon. Any illusion of realism suddenly falls away. (This effect also occurs in 2013's *Even Pricks* with a slightly different resonance: an erect thumb slowly and inexorably loses its uprightness. The comic aspect of Atkins's films is often overlooked.)

Atkins seems to know he is going after big game, and part of the thrill of his work is watching an artist aim for the larger questions – death, life, sex, love – while also wrestling with the impossibility of answering them. In *Ribbons*, the character sings the aria 'Erbarme Dich' from Bach's *St Matthew's Passion*, and then, in his computerised voice, apologises for the "histrionic, horrible" music. When I asked Atkins about these high-art references, he responded with a typically complex and self-reflexive argument – readers who have not had the pleasure of seeing one of Atkins's videos in the flesh can take the quotations here as evocative of his works' voiceovers. "So much of my stuff," he says, "is operating at a pretty hysterical pitch, to match the excessive attempts on authenticity that the CGI aesthetic makes. Everything is at its limit, which tends to emphasise the failure of the attempt to sufficiently represent or communicate extraordinary experiences: love, death, sex, the weather, etc. At these extremes – which are more or less histrionic, more or less absurd – the failure of the image to convince, overstretched as it is, tends to retrieve some kind of irrecuperability of those experiences – of experience *per se*." Atkins is trying to represent the reality of how one experiences something, while questioning how this can be presented in an entirely artificial, apparently immaterial medium such as CGI effects. But rather than give up and see the digital landscape as flat, unreal or simply uncanny, he argues time and again that real experience is not lost in the digital ether, only transformed.

The essence of this transformation has to do with the body, and the way it appears in the digital world as almost lifelike. In *Even Pricks*, a chimp gazes at the camera and then stretches its mouth into a wide smile. It's a terrifying image, though it might sound benign: a chimp widely, impossibly grinning. In Atkins's universe, everything is just like real but not, of course, the real thing. The effect on the viewer is unmistakable: the images can be repellent, repugnant. Atkins, that is, activates a response from the 'uncanny valley', the tipping point where something becomes just lifelike enough to disconcert or even scare people.

This is a deliberate strategy and relates back to the importance of the figures in his work: "I want to retrieve matter from the so-called immaterial elsewhere, and present it as an embodied experience for the viewer. So the videos work pretty hard at addressing bodies – by apeing them, pastiching them and pummelling them, with heavy bass and sharp CGI stuff, in an attempt to hold them. It does so not in the way in which cinema has a captive audience, but in a way that doesn't let the audience drift off into some out-of-body, surrendered, intoxicated state." By assaulting the viewer on all sides with visual and aural effects, Atkins keeps them present in a way that the digital world cannot.

It is important to note that this kind of direct address or even interest in the landscape of digital

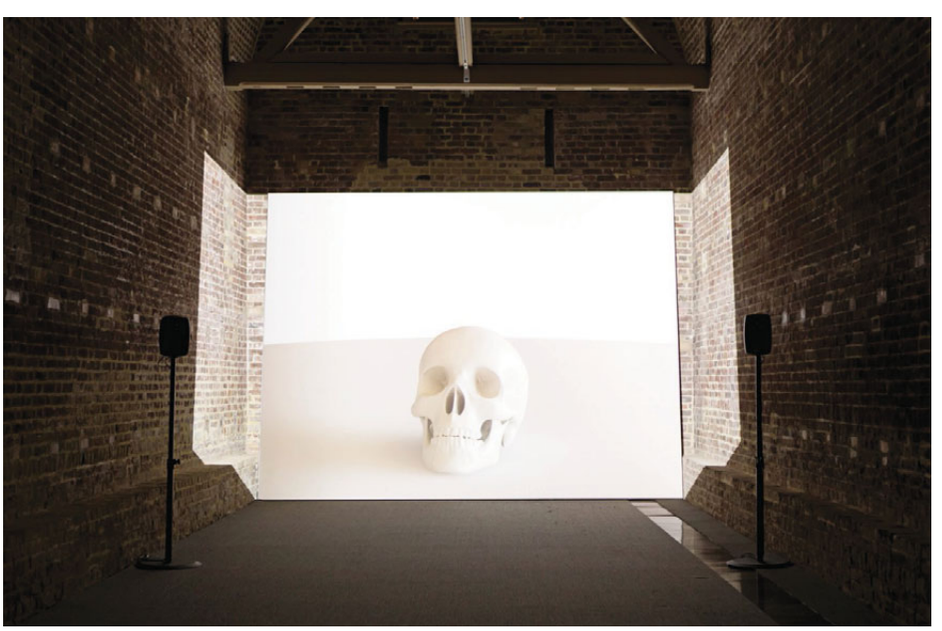
Atkins investigates the tipping point where something becomes just lifelike enough to disconcert or even scare people

effects has emerged only relatively recently in the mainstream art world. (I say 'mainstream' to separate out the contributions of net and media artists, who have always been, often deliberately, at a remove from the artists showing in biennials, commercial galleries and contemporary art museums.) Up until the last five years, the art world was particularly motivated by 16mm and 35mm celluloid film, which was often shown not just as a projection, but accompanied by paraphernalia such as the 16mm projector or the film strip itself, underlining the importance of the celluloid medium itself within the work. The apex of this was probably Tacita Dean's monument to film in London's Tate Turbine Hall, an installation drawing on historical moments within experimental cinema and occupying the form of a 13-metre monolith resembling a celluloid film strip, simply titled *FILM* (2011–12). *FILM* turned out to be the swansong of this fascination, a farewell in more ways than one to celluloid. Since then, the so-called 'post-internet generation' of artists has emerged, largely in London, New York and Los Angeles. They are interested in ripping stock imagery, creating artificial fields and populating them with obviously digitally rendered figures, in exploring the extreme reproducibility of images on the web, and in questioning the immateriality of the digital world. Atkins's work, accompanied by his complex and highly intelligent arguments about the digital, both typifies this new type of filmmaking and reflects upon it, and he has rather quickly emerged as one of this group's leading artists. (Others are Ryan Trecartin, Jordan Wolfson, Shana Moulton, James Richards, Helen Marten, Hannah Sawtell, Erica Scourti – though they would all probably resist being grouped together.) This is the backstory to Atkins's show at the Sackler Serpentine Gallery, and indeed the solo shows he has had at other large institutions. It also suggests that a difficulty for him in future will be how he negotiates his association with this group of artists, and how he bids for his work to be taken on its own merits.

At the same time, it is an exciting moment for the artists'-moving-image community: interest and momentum has converged around a group of artists whose work is tackling current questions that have significance beyond the art and film worlds, and which poses big questions in the very language they seek to question. (Much work needs to be done by artists and critics, and by the curators who support them, to connect their recent contributions with those of Expanded Cinema, cybernetics, net and media art.) Thus Atkins seeks both to highlight the uncanniness of digital creations and also to use the digital against itself, to show it up as only illusive. "I reckon it feels important to shed the 'immaterial'," he explains. "It always feels like a lie – that always we're talking about a deferral rather than a lack. It's symptomatic of a kind of productive mystification that keeps matter and material consequence in abeyance, over there, out of sight. The figuration of calling server farms 'clouds' is a pretty explicit example.

"Having said that," he continues, "when this material elsewhere – so-called immaterial – is inaccessible, irretrievable, as in death, the immaterial rhetoric becomes a way of making the intangible imaginatively tangible. Which I think is what sort of happens with digital stuff: that it's easier to access an imaginary immaterial of metaphoric somethings than it is to address the sweatshops and mines and wrecked bodies in countries countless miles away." Working within this expanded field of the digital, Atkins seeks, ambitiously, to reflect the experience of digital and internet technologies while not forgetting the wider world these are couched within. S

Ed Atkins is at the Serpentine Sackler Gallery, London, until 25 August



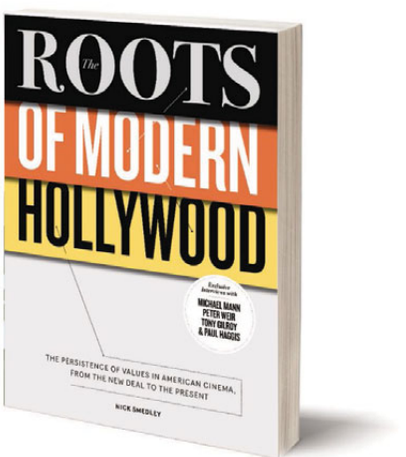
To be or not to be: *Ribbons*, like much of Atkins's work, aims for the big questions of life and death

© 2014 READS/COURTESY OF CABINET, LONDON AND ISABELLA BORTOLOZZI GALERIE, BERLIN

Intellect books

publishers of original thinking | www.intellectbooks.com

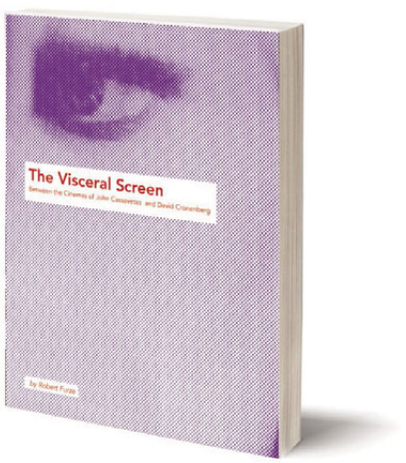
FORTHCOMING TITLES FROM OUR FILM LIST



The Roots of Modern Hollywood
The Persistence of Values in American Cinema, from the New Deal to the Present

By Nick Smedley | ISBN 9781783203734
Paperback | £30, $43

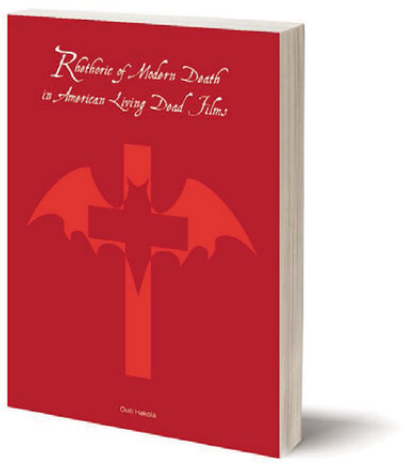
In this insightful study of Hollywood cinema since 1969, film historian Nick Smedley traces the cultural and intellectual heritage of American films, showing how the more thoughtful recent cinema owes a profound debt to Holly wood's traditions of liberalism, first articulated in the New Deal era. Although American cinema is not usually thought of as politically or socially engaged, Smedley demonstrates how Holly wood can be seen as one of the most value-laden of all national cinemas.



The Visceral Screen
Between the Cinemas of John Cassavetes and David Cronenberg

By Robert Furze | ISBN 9781783203703
Hardback | £60, $86

The Visceral Screen sets out to articulate alternative ways of appreciating film aesthetics outside the narrative/ spectacle continuum. Cassavetes and Cronenberg are established auteurs, but the elements of their films that appear to be barriers to their artistic status—for example, slipshod method and lingering violence or pre-digital special effects—are reassessed in *The Visceral Screen* as other indicators of creativity. In this way, Furze encourages debates of what makes a film good or bad—beyond how much it is seen to adhere to particular, established models of filmmaking.



Rhetoric of Modern Death in American Living Dead Films

By Outi Hakola | ISBN 9781783203796
Paperback | £43, $30

Zombies, vampires, and mummies are frequent stars of American horror films. But what does their cinematic omnipresence and audiences' hunger for such films tell us about American views of death? Here, Outi Hakola investigates the ways in which American living-dead films have addressed death through different narrative and rhetorical solutions during the twentieth century. She focuses on films from the 1930s, including *Dracula*, *The Mummy*, and *White Zombie*, films of the 1950s and 1960s such as *Night of the Living Dead* and *The Return of Dracula*, as well as more recent fare like *Bram Stoker's Dracula*, *The Mummy*, and *Resident Evil*.

Intellect is an independent academic publisher of books and journals, to view our catalogue or order our titles visit www.intellectbooks.com or E-mail: james@intellectbooks.com. Intellect, The Mill, Parnall Road, Fishponds, Bristol, UK, BS16 3JG. Telephone: +44 (0) 117 9589910.

Reviews

70 The Rover

Watching Robert Pattinson and Guy Pearce in David Michôd's dystopian future outback, you may be reminded of 'Unforgiven', for the director has crafted a film that, like Clint Eastwood's, is a stately, portentous widescreen death trip

76 Films of the month

82 Films

110 Home Cinema

120 Books

Lilting

United Kingdom 2013
Director: Hong Khaou
Certificate 15 86m 21s

Reviewed by Ashley Clark

Lilting – the debut feature by Cambodian-born, UK-based Hong Khaou – is a tender, low-key examination of grief, fractured communication and the inherent emotional danger of building one's whole life around a single person.

It stars Ben Whishaw as Richard, a young man reeling from the recent death of his boyfriend, Kai (Andrew Leung). In a haze of grief, Richard visits Kai's mother Junn (famed Chinese actress Cheng Pei Pei) at the drab retirement home where she was guiltily secreted by her son shortly before his death. Richard is met with a frosty reception; the isolated, non-English speaker Junn was heavily dependent on Kai for company and support, and is resentful of Richard for hogging her only son's precious time. She is, however, apparently oblivious to the fact that Richard and Kai were an item. Borne of a desire to keep Kai's memory alive through Junn and achieve a personal sense of closure, Richard resolves to forge a relationship with the resentful lady, and spots his opportunity when he discovers that she is dating an old English gent (Peter Bowles, amusingly dry). Ostensibly to oil the wheels of the elderly lovebirds' relationship, Richard employs a friendly young British-Chinese woman named Vann (the lively, likeable Naomi Christie) to act as an interpreter. The ensuing narrative quietly makes hay from intricately exploiting the tense, cavernous spaces that emerge between what's verbalised and what isn't (how long, for example, can poor Richard keep his and Kai's secret?) and between what's intended and understood: thanks to the delicate, multilingual set-up, almost every exchange carries an unpredictable dramatic charge.

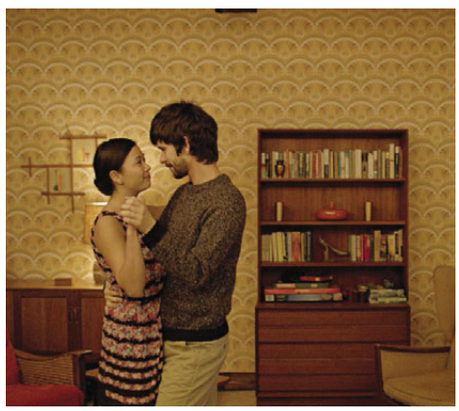
Lilting, the latest offering from Film London and BBC Films' Microwave scheme for low-budget independent cinema (its budget: £120,000), began life as a play. Though it's not difficult to imagine it being staged successfully, the material translates well to film, and even suits its low budget. The small cast and limited range of locations add to the overall aura of intimacy, while Khaou makes excellent use of cinema-specific techniques. He frequently employs searching close-ups and tight framing to accentuate characters' isolation, highlighting the importance of their gestures and facial expressions. There are, for example, a number of finely wrought close-ups of Cheng, who gives a subtle, still performance of bruised stoicism, with flashes of irrepressible irritation. Junn's backstory – she is a disillusioned Cambodian-Chinese immigrant unwilling and unable to acclimatise to new surroundings – constitutes one of the film's most quietly moving threads.

Lilting also benefits from intelligent use of elliptical transitions, which often collapse temporal states without the need for an edit. Khaou's biggest formal gamble is to periodically and unexpectedly insert disorienting sequences of Kai interacting with either Richard or Junn; his scenes with Richard take the form of intimate flashbacks, while those with Junn have a more hallucinatory quality, made notable by Ula Pontikos's slightly impressionistic cinematography. It's a smart use of form to keenly evoke that strange, hard-to-communicate time in the aftermath of a bereavement, when the departed person remains a palpable presence despite their corporeal absence. One long take set in a greasy-spoon café morphs imperceptibly from a businesslike discussion between Richard and Vann to another, more personal chat between Richard and Kai. Gradually it dawns on us why Richard has chosen to take Vann to this particular café: because memories of his relationship are rooted there.

Intriguingly, in play form, *Lilting* didn't feature a gay theme: the Richard character was the widower of a suddenly deceased woman. However, Khaou – who for a number of years worked as head of home entertainment at specialist UK LGBT distributor Peccadillo Pictures – made the change to add a further layer of dramatic intrigue. It works beautifully, and carries an added resonance given recent developments in the trajectory of LGBT cinema. In a recent article for the *Guardian*, the critic Ben Walters convincingly situated *Lilting* in a current trend of 'backward-looking' LGBT

Faraway, so close: Cheng Pei Pei and Ben Whishaw as the grieving mother and boyfriend of Kai

The film evokes that strange, hard-to-communicate time in the aftermath of a bereavement when the departed person remains a palpable presence



Shall we dance?: Naomi Christie and Whishaw

cinema that has emerged in a time of "apparent legal equality, with less demand for big-screen expressions of cathartic angst or romantic wish-fulfilment". This trend, continued Walters, includes "small-scale, naturalistic, bittersweet" works characterised by "present-mindedness and a willingness to explore grief, so often deferred through the years of struggle".

In this respect, Khaou's film resembles Xavier Dolan's *Tom at the Farm* (2013), in which a closeted copywriter appears at the house of his late boyfriend's mother, who was oblivious to her son's sexuality. Instead of the roiling erotic tension and Chabrol-esque intrigue of the young Canadian's film, however, *Lilting* is a quieter, more reflective affair. Its gentle approach more keenly recalls Neil Hunter and Tom Hunsinger's sorely underrated, Essex-set *Lawless Heart* (2001), itself a character-led drama set directly in the aftermath of the death of a gay man's partner. *Lilting* also puts me strongly in mind of Michael Winterbottom's Chekhov-inspired masterpiece *Wonderland* (1999), with which it shares not an LGBT theme but a quiet naturalism and a strong sense of London – frequently depicted on film as a bustling metropolis – as a lonely, chilly place. Like *Wonderland*, *Lilting* largely excises London 'landmark' imagery from the frame. Instead, there are mere flashes of city iconography – a reflection of a red bus here, a rushing train there – all of which evoke a thematically apposite sense of transience and impermanence.

Though in most respects a remarkably confident and composed first feature, *Lilting* is not without its flaws. Leung gives a spirited turn in his limited screen time, but he is not (yet) in the same class as Whishaw, and the imbalance in the quality of their acting – particularly in crucial, intimate scenes – can be striking. I was also a little sceptical about Khaou's decision to withhold the exact circumstances of Kai's death until such a late juncture in the story – the film has enough authentic, character-rooted drama for this lie of omission to come across as an unnecessarily manipulative leveraging of suspense.

The final word should be reserved for Whishaw, who gives an extraordinarily moving performance as the grieving man. The first time I saw him in action was nine years ago, when he played the small but memorable role of put-upon PA Pingu in *Nathan Barley*, Chris Morris and Charlie Brooker's scathing satire of clueless Shoreditch media types. *Barley* was a show of outsize comic performances and baroque cruelty – poor Pingu is electrocuted by his hipster-monster boss – but, amid all the madness, Whishaw communicated a bruised, tragic sadness that would have tonally unbalanced the show had he been on screen for any great length of time. With his limpid eyes, gentle voice and rangy yet fragile physicality, Whishaw brings the same heartbreaking qualities to *Lilting*, and he's in almost every scene. His embodiment of grief is utterly convincing, and he gives an unselfish performance, vacillating fluidly between compassion, petulance and tenacity, all the while seeming so vulnerable that he could shatter into a million pieces at any moment. One lump-in-the-throat reaction shot of Richard, coming after Junn unexpectedly compliments his technique of using chopsticks to fry bacon – a technique obviously taught to him by Kai – might be the most quietly devastating piece of acting I've seen all year.

Credits and Synopsis

Produced by
Dominic Buchanan
Written by
Hong Khaou
Director of Photography
Ula Pontikos
Editor
Mark Towns
Production Designer
Miren Marañon
Music Composed by
Stuart Earl
Sound Recordist
Pete Cowasji
Costume Designer
Camille Benda

Production Companies
Film London presents a Lilting production
A Microwave film in association with BBC Films, Stink, SUMS Film & Media
Produced with the support of Film London and with funding from the National Lottery

CAST
Ben Whishaw
Richard
Cheng Pei Pei
Junn
Andrew Leung
Kai
Morven Christie
Margaret
Naomi Christie
Vann
Peter Bowles
Alan

In Colour
[2.35:1]
Part-subtitled

Distributor
Artificial Eye Film Company

London, present day. Thirtysomething Richard goes to a retirement home to visit Junn, the elderly Cambodian-Chinese mother of his recently deceased boyfriend Kai. (Kai appears fleetingly throughout the film in scenes that sit somewhere between flashbacks and hallucinations.) Junn speaks barely a word of English and has no idea that her son was gay, let alone in a relationship with Richard, who carefully presents himself as a close friend. Junn is frosty towards him. Junn is dating fellow elderly care-home resident Alan, even though they don't share a common language — Alan, like Richard, is English. Richard persists in attempting to build a relationship with Junn, and hires a young British-Chinese woman, Vann, to act as a translator in order to aid the relationship between Junn and Alan. The tensions between Richard and Junn ease over a series of conversations moderated by Vann, but are inflamed afresh when Junn decides to stop dating Alan, to Richard's chagrin.

Junn visits Richard and Kai's flat to collect some of her son's belongings. It emerges that Kai had been on his way to see Junn — with the intention of finally coming out to her, and inviting her to live with him and Richard — when he was hit and killed by a dangerous driver. Richard angrily criticises Junn for not attempting to assimilate to English life; he explains how Kai felt pressured to look after her, and how the decision to place her in a care home left him with feelings of terrible guilt. Richard reveals to her that Kai was gay, and that he and Kai were lovers. Junn seems to accept this, and the film concludes with an extended monologue from Junn about accepting ageing and loneliness.

Australian death trip: apocalypse survivors Archie (David Field) and Henry (Scoot McNairy) are confronted by Eric (Guy Pearce), whose car they have stolen

The Rover

Australia/USA 2013
Director: David Michôd
Certificate 15 102m 33s

Reviewed by Nick Pinkerton

Spoiler alert: this review reveals a plot twist

It's easy to take a life in the dystopian future outback of *The Rover*. Literally very easy: although the film takes place a full decade after the collapse of civilisation, nobody seems to have developed particularly sophisticated self-preservation skills in the meantime, and the film's numerous kills are so many turkey shoots. The victims are sometimes unarmed, usually oblivious targets set up against wide-open spaces. They die without returning fire, often with their hands dumbly at their sides, as though they just couldn't be bothered, and given how things are, maybe it's just as well to die anyways.

There is a fair case to be made that this is intentional on the part of writer/director David Michôd, who developed *The Rover* with the Australian actor Joel Edgerton, one of the stars of Michôd's *Animal Kingdom* (2010). The world of his film is one in which life has ceased entirely to have any meaning, particularly in the hard eyes of Eric, the lone traveller with whom *The Rover* begins and ends. Early in the movie, Eric confronts the armed-to-the-teeth gang who've stolen his car with only a nothing-to-lose stare. This same power of indifference to life and death stays his own hand later, when he has a gun on the proprietress of a brothel catering to paedophiles (Gillian Jones, in a small but unsettling role).

Eric is played by Guy Pearce, another *Animal Kingdom* veteran, and the defining note of the performance is deliberation, precision. When he first appears on screen, he saunters into a roadside watering hole with a measured stride, and throughout the film the camera doesn't seem to follow him so much as be pulled along by him, travelling at the speed of his weighty tread. This is in marked contrast to Henry (Scoot McNairy) and his bandit brethren, making a frantic getaway from a botched robbery, accidentally rolling their escape vehicle in a squabble.

Eric doesn't have anyone to squabble with, so his meanness turns in on himself. He's alone when we encounter him, and there is a sense that he has been that way for a very long time, so long that he's practically lost the ability to speak. His solitude and his inviolable stoic silence are broken when, out of necessity, he acquires a travelling companion. This is Rey, Henry's brother and accomplice, whose life Eric saves so that Rey can lead him back to the car, and whose loyalty he gradually wins through treating him as something other than contemptible. Robert Pattinson plays the role, and the former teen model has never so thoroughly effaced his prettiness as he does here. The alabaster visage and aristocratic diction of *Twilight*'s Edward Cullen are dirtied up, as Pattinson employs a southern American accent, teeth that have never known the touch of dental floss, a layer of that road grime that seems to

The film's victims die without returning fire, hands dumbly at their sides, as though given how things are maybe it's just as well to die anyways

lie over everything, and a few pet flies that he's constantly shooing away from his fetid mouth.

Rey is what the folks back home would've charitably called 'slow', or less charitably a simpleton, a dummy, a retard. Pattinson conveys this through frequent recourse to a my-brain-hurts squint whenever Rey is thinking hard, which he has much occasion to do, as he is deliberating on whether he should betray the brother who betrayed him. It's a play-dumb performance of the kind that Billy Bob Thornton used to excel at and flyweight actors frequently seize on to show how dedicated they are to their craft. Maybe five years ago Pattinson's need to be taken seriously would've gotten in the way but he's at ease here, and his work moves beyond the level of community theatre production of *Of Mice and Men* thanks to the flashes of animal guile that he invests Rey with. The performance is a collection of tics, to be sure – the chronically shy kid's habit of ducking his gaze away in mid-sentence, the excitable lashing gestures followed immediately by smothering self-consciousness – but these unpredictable sparks keep Rey from settling into a groove.

Rey is a killer – how else could anyone survive in this godforsaken place? – but he has retained the beatific innocence of the halfwit, and this works away at Eric's stern, loveless resolve. Eric's gradual softening towards his companion is at the centre of *The Rover*, while world-building is eschewed. For example, the precise nature of the catastrophe that led to the current state of affairs is never explained, nor is the role the omnipresent military patrols play in the new world (dis)order. Given the tattered fashions worn by the inhabitants of the outback, the crisis the film is set ten years after might take place tomorrow. By contrast, there are distinctly out-of-time flourishes: Eric runs across a travelling circus, and Michôd populates his film with faces and bodies that the Victorians believed spoke of corruption, with pocked cheeks and saggy torsos.

In such an environment, it's no surprise that Eric has developed a hard carapace, though a bit of backstory lurks within his taciturn shell, just waiting to be revealed. This occurs in an exchange between Eric and the leader of a group of soldiers who take him captive, when he lets on to the source of his dangerous indifference: ten years earlier he killed his unfaithful wife and her lover, an act that went unnoticed amid general social upheaval, and he interpreted this as damning proof of the upending of any moral order.

Later, when he has retrieved the car that has caused him so much trouble, he pops the trunk and unloads a mysterious cargo, which is being taken for burial. It's a bundle of blankets with a hank of yellow hair visible sticking out of it – for a moment you think it could possibly be the remains of Eric's wife, dead ten years and dried to the consistency of jerky, but it's revealed instead to be the corpse of a mangy dog, presumably the best friend who got him through the interceding decade. (If the film's title is a play on the name 'Rover', this would be the only evidence that Michôd's screenplay has a sense of humour.) The last image of the film is Eric breaking the stony soil of the desert with his spade, and this chipping of hard surface recalls us to the sight of his eyes, heretofore unblinking and cold, welling with tears after Rey's death.

Watching Eric and Rey, you may be reminded of in 1992's *Unforgiven*, for Michôd has crafted a film that, like Clint Eastwood's, is a stately, portentous widescreen death trip, and Eric even gets to opine to his protégé about the meaning of taking a life. Eric, in turn, will have to relearn the meaning of losing one – and this is where Michôd loses me. Even when Eric briefly eases his self-control, Michôd never lets his movie breathe, and there's something smotheringly schematic in the way he deploys his people, the way they're robbed of any freedom of movement, even to take cover when the shooting starts. Perhaps it's meant as a manifestation of sun-stunned apathy but it feels like painterly atrophy. While there is much to admire in *The Rover*, that final crunch of the shovel only resonates if you can accept Eric's learning to mourn the death of dumbly loyal companions – rather than reckon with, say, what he did to his wife and her lover – as some kind of emotionally stirring breakthrough. Otherwise, it's barren ground.

Rey (Robert Pattinson)

McNairy and Field

Credits and Synopsis

Produced by
Liz Watts
David Linde
David Michôd
Written by
David Michôd
Based on a story by David Michôd, Joel Edgerton
Director of Photography
Natasha Braier
Editor
Peter Sciberras
Production Designer
Jo Ford

Original Music
Antony Partos
Sound Designer
Sam Petty
Costume Designer
Cappi Ireland

©Rover Film Holdings Pty Limited, Screen Australia, Screen NSW and the South Australian Film Corporation
Production Companies
Screen Australia and Filmnation present in association with the South Australian Film Corporation and Screen NSW, Yoki Inc, Blue-Tongue Films
A Porchlight Films/ Lava Bear Films production
Produced in association with Yoki Inc, Blue-Tongue Films
Financed in association with Fulcrum Media Finance, Media Super, Union Bank, Film Nation Entertainment
Financed with the assistance of Screen NSW and the South Australian Film Corporation
Executive Producers
Tory Metzger
Adam Rymer
Vincent Sheehan
Anita Shehan
Nina Stevenson
Glen Basner
Alison Cohen

CAST
Guy Pearce
Eric
Robert Pattinson
Rey
Scoot McNairy
Henry
David Field
Archie
Anthony Hayes
soldier 1
Gillian Jones
grandma
Susan Prior
Dorothy Peeples, 'Dot'

Dolby Digital
In Colour
[2.35:1]

Distributor
E1 Films

Rural Australia, ten years after the collapse of civilisation. A trio of desperados fleeing the aftermath of a robbery ditch their truck and make off with a car belonging to loner Eric. Eric gives chase, and is knocked unconscious by Henry, one of the bandits.

Awakening, Eric continues his pursuit and encounters Rey, Henry's slow-witted brother, who was left for dead during the robbery. Eric procures a handgun, killing the seller in the process, and takes Rey to get patched up by a doctor, so that he can lead him to Henry. Friends of the deceased gun-seller follow Eric, and he eliminates them in a firefight. Intending to kill Eric during a stopover at an abandoned motel, Rey accidentally shoots a child, and initiates another gunfight in which only Eric's intervention saves him from a soldier's fire. This creates a bond between the men, and when Eric is later arrested by soldiers, Rey kills Eric's captors and frees him.

Eric and Rey arrive at the outpost where Henry and his gang have holed up, and Rey announces his intention to kill his brother. However, Rey hesitates when he has his brother in his sights and is fatally shot. Eric kills the entire gang, and weeps over Rey's death. He drives his stolen car into the desert. The precious cargo that he has gone through so much to retrieve is the body of a dead dog in the trunk. He digs the stony ground to bury it.

The girls from Argentina: 12-year-old Lilith (Florencia Bado) catches the eye of a mysterious stranger

Wakolda

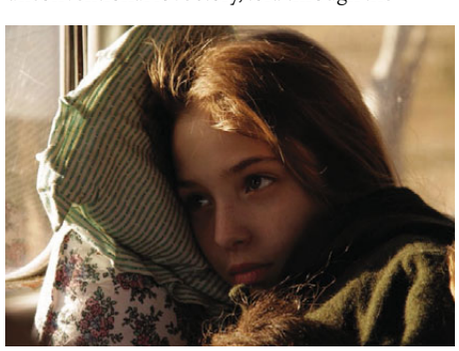
Argentina/France/Spain/Norway/USA 2013
Director: Lucía Puenzo

Reviewed by Maria Delgado

The novelist and director Lucía Puenzo has made a name for herself with films in which she has sought to explore aspects of Argentine reality that remain hidden or under wraps. *XXY*, her 2007 directorial debut, examined the coming of age of an intersex teenager and her parents' struggle to protect her from social ostracism and ridicule; two years later, *The Fish Child* (adapted from Puenzo's 2004 novel) exposed the tensions within upper-middle-class Argentine society through the prism of a lesbian teen romance across racial and cultural divides.

For her third feature, Puenzo turns once more to her own fiction, reworking her 2011 novel about Nazi medic Josef Mengele for the screen. Mengele's notoriety is largely based on his activities at Auschwitz-Birkenau: he was the 'Angel of Death' who lured identical twins with sweets to his laboratory and conducted fatally invasive genetic experiments on them. He fled Germany for South America in 1949, moving across the continent and taking on a number of false identities to evade capture. Little is known of his time in Argentina; he was initially based near Buenos Aires but relocated during the 1950s to the south of the country, where he practised as a veterinary surgeon, conducting experiments on cattle while continuing his research into genetics by buying blood samples from pregnant women. The skeletal details of that time serve as the framework on which Puenzo builds a narrative envisaging what might have happened during a stay in Bariloche in Patagonia.

When we first see Mengele, he is looking at a young girl playing on an empty piece of land. He observes her from a distance, fixing his transparent blue eyes and thin smile on her. She returns his gaze and the stage is set for an unconventional love story, told through the eyes of 12-year-old Lilith (impressive newcomer Florencia Bado), reflecting on her first encounter with the fugitive Nazi, who was then going by the name of Helmut Gregor. Soon Gregor ingratiates himself into Lilith's family's affections so he can get close enough to experiment on the girl, who was born prematurely and remains unusually small for her age. (At one point, she is shown running on the school's playing fields, her scrawny frame noticeable next to her robust peers, one of whom refers to her as "a dwarf".) Like the teenage protagonists of Puenzo's earlier films, Lilith just wants to fit in. Her mother Eva (Natalia Oreiro), a German speaker raised in the German-language community of Bariloche, warms to Gregor's charm, impeccable manners and financial generosity. Indeed, Eva's desire to have a 'normal' daughter means that she is willing to deceive her husband Enzo (Diego Peretti) by allowing Gregor to supervise her latest pregnancy and ply Lilith with growth hormones. Enzo is more suspicious of the suave Gregor but he too is temporarily seduced by an offer to help mass-produce the porcelain dolls he fabricates in his workshop.



Florencia Bado as Lilith

The film slowly builds up a menacing sense of unease: unexplained visitors emerge from the hydroplanes that land on Bariloche's breathtaking Lake Nahuel Huapi; through the open door to a makeshift lab, Lilith observes medical instruments and rows of blood

samples; a photographer takes clandestine photographs of the enigmatic Gregor. Puenzo contrasts the spectacular landscape with an almost claustrophobic focus on the details of Gregor's notebooks: close-ups of meticulous line drawings and clinical diary entries are juxtaposed with snow-capped mountains, pretty chalets and quaint rustic interiors. Bariloche's awe-inspiring beauty 'hid' SS officer Erich Priebke for decades and the film never lets the viewer forget the danger lurking in the wooded foothills and elegant glaciers.

Mengele's time in South America was handled as conspiracy thriller in Franklin J. Schaffner's *The Boys from Brazil* (1978). Here the focus is on mapping the psychology of the society that chose to protect these fugitive criminals. *Wakolda* is, in many ways, a film about complicity and silence: Gregor is able to evade capture because he is so effectively protected by the closed community of German expats in Bariloche. Indeed, the antiseptic grey-walled German school that Lilith attends has a disciplinary ethos with strong links to the Nazi regime: the headteacher boasts of the need for order, calm and self-control, but beneath the veneer of respectability lies a bullying culture in which the vulnerable are perennially picked on. Eva shows Lilith photographs of her own school days, where the children are shown making Nazi salutes. The camera doesn't linger on the pictures; it is simply a brief reminder – one of many – of the less salubrious aspects of life in this picture-postcard corner of Argentina. Ana Pauls's impeccably groomed nurse, attending Eva following childbirth, warns Gregor of Adolf Eichmann's arrest and alerts him to the hydroplane waiting to whisk him away to Paraguay; Guillermo Pfenning's schoolteacher gushingly tells Gregor how honoured the community is to have him there. *Wakolda* traces the legacy of totalitarianism in a country that was itself to hurtle towards a brutal military dictatorship in the period between 1976 and 1983.

The politics of silence that allowed the military junta to 'disappear' some 30,000 citizens during the 'Dirty War' are shown to have effectively been put in place decades earlier. *Wakolda* portrays Argentina as a society of secrets and lies, of clandestine operations and guarded deals, where Mengele is not merely sheltered but also permitted to continue with the experiments he initiated at Auschwitz. The closing credits remind us that he escaped Mossad for almost 30 years and continued to experiment on children and pregnant women until his death in 1979.

Lucía Puenzo delivers an expert fusion of coming-of-age drama about the construction of self and tense, timely thriller about complicity, guilt and denial

Wakolda provides further evidence of the deft visual style Puenzo demonstrated in her first two films. The muted colour palette – blue-green-grey exteriors and sepia-hued interiors – gives the film the washed-out look of a faded photograph. The story is narrated from the point of view of Lilith, whose translucent skin gives her something of an unearthly quality. Her emerging sexuality becomes a factor in the narrative, a fumbling kiss with a boy in her class stimulating further interest from the ever-watchful Gregor, whose own pallid and inexpressive features are juxtaposed with Enzo's lean, animated face. The latter's name may suggest Italian descent but his features also point to possible Jewish ancestry.

As Gregor/Mengele, Spanish actor Alex Brendemühl never resorts to caricature or demonisation. Mengele's ideology of racial purity was rooted in an obsessive perfectionism. His desire to take over production of Enzo's strange porcelain dolls with mechanical beating hearts and sanitise them into blonde belles functions as a potent metaphor for an ideology that refused to tolerate difference of any shape or form.

Gregor's fastidiousness finds an uncanny parallel in the fanatical behaviour of the urbane plastic surgeon played by Antonio Banderas in Pedro Almodóvar's *The Skin I Live In* (2011). Banderas's Ledgard works illicitly to create the perfect female body for his kidnapped teenage boy; Brendemühl's Gregor wants to turn the bony Lilith into the perfect Aryan woman. Legitimacy is bestowed on both ventures by the community around them – particularly Marisa Paredes's deranged mother in *The Skin I Live In* and Oreiro's willingly compliant Eva in *Wakolda*. In a society saturated with images of idealised female beauty, Puenzo reminds us that these representations are fabrications designed to intimidate, coerce and subjugate those who would seek to emulate their reductive paradigms. *Wakolda*'s expert fusion of a coming-of-age drama about the construction of the sexual and social self with a genuinely tense and timely thriller about complicity, guilt and denial in modern Argentina serves as a telling reminder of the fact that the personal and the political always go hand in hand.

The devil in disguise: Alex Brendemühl avoids caricature in his portrayal of Josef Mengele

Credits and Synopsis

Produced by
Lucía Puenzo
Written by
Lucía Puenzo
Based on her novel
Director of Photography
Nicolás Puenzo
Editing
Hugo Primero
Art Director
Marcelo Chaves
Music
Swing:
Daniel Tarrab
Andrés Goldstein
Laura Zisman
Dirty Three:
Warren Ellis
Mick Turner
Jim White
Sound
Fernando Soldevila
Costumes
Beatriz Di Benedetto

©Historias Cinematográficas S.A., Pyramide Productions SAS, Wanda Visión S.A., Hummel Film AS
Production Companies
An Historias Cinematográficas production
Co-produced by Moviecity
Made with the assistance of Programa Ibermedia
With the support of Sør Fond – Norwegian South Film Fund, Aide aux Cinémas du Monde, CNC – Centre National du Cinéma et de l'Image Animée, Institut Français, Ministère des Affaires Étrangères – République Française, ICAA – Ministerio de Educación, Cultura y Deporte (Gobierno de España), INCAA – Instituto nacional de cine y artes audiovisuales, Moviecity
With the participation of TVE – Televisión Española
Associate producers: Cinear – Cine Argentino, Endemol Argentina
Co-produced by Telefe, DC – Distribution Company Sudamericana S.A., The Stan Jakubowicz Co., Hummel Film, Wanda Visión, Pyramide Productions
Produced by Historias
A film by Lucía Puenzo

Executive Producers
Nicolás Batlle
In Spain:
Miguel Morales

CAST

Alex Brendemühl
Josef Mengele, 'Helmut Gregor'
Natalia Oreiro
Eva
Diego Peretti
Enzo
Elena Roger
Nora Eldoc
Alan Daicz
Tomás
Nicolás Marsella
Polo
Guillermo Pfening
Klaus
Ana Pauls
nurse
Florencia Bado
Lilith

Dolby Digital
In Colour
[2.35:1]
Subtitles

Distributor
Peccadillo Pictures Ltd

Patagonia, 1960. Twelve-year-old Lilith is travelling with her parents and two brothers to a new home in Bariloche, when she is observed playing by a middle-aged German vet going by the name of Helmut Gregor. He asks her family if he can travel the remote 300km journey south following their car. Eva, Lilith's pregnant mother, is also a German speaker, born and brought up in Bariloche's German-language community. She is returning with her husband Enzo and their children to her parents' hotel, which they plan to renovate and reopen.

Gregor ingratiates himself with the family and moves into the hotel. He convinces Eva that Lilith, who was born prematurely, should be given growth hormones. Eva allows him to oversee her pregnancy and to treat Lilith. After an initial growth spurt, Lilith reacts badly to the hormone treatment, breaking out in a fever and rashes. Gregor offers to help Enzo mass-produce the dolls he makes at home, but Enzo is increasingly suspicious of Gregor and confronts him over his treatment of Lilith.

Eva gives birth to twins but one of the newborns has serious breathing problems and Enzo suspects Gregor's involvement. A Mossad agent, posing as a photographer, alerts Enzo to Gregor's true identity: he is the Nazi war criminal Josef Mengele. Gregor flees to Paraguay before he can be caught.

The final credits relate that the Mossad agent was killed the day after Mengele's escape, and that Mengele evaded capture for almost 30 years.

All This Mayhem

Director: Eddie Martin
Certificate 15 104m 9s

Reviewed by Jamie Graham

In 2001, Stacy Peralta's breakout documentary *Dogtown and Z-Boys* offered a nostalgic account of the birth of skateboarding in Santa Monica. Shuffling 1970s video footage with a gallery of misty-eyed talking heads as the now middle-aged participants recalled the halcyon days of their historic youth, it told of the long-haired, loose-limbed surfers who sought land-based kicks on polyurethane wheels. Narration was provided by Sean Penn.

Set between the late 80s and 2012, Eddie Martin's documentary *All This Mayhem* also makes use of home movies, video and stills, with middle-aged talking heads and a voiceover – this time by the key player, Tas Pappas – offering context. It presents a later, inevitably bleaker chapter in the sport's evolution, as the purity and joie de vivre are corroded by fame, wealth, intense rivalries, corporate sponsorship and rock-star lifestyles.

By focusing on the aptly soaring-and-plummeting lives of Australian brothers Tas and Ben Pappas, *All This Mayhem* advances a profanity-ridden, hedonistic flight-of-Icarus tale not dissimilar to those found in the based-on-truth stories in Scorsese's *Goodfellas* and *The Wolf of Wall Street*. Such cautionary rise-and-fall narratives are, of course, a staple of cinema, informing everything from Soderbergh's *Magic Mike* and Paul Thomas Anderson's *Boogie Nights* to Welles's *Citizen Kane* and the Warner Bros gangster pictures of the 1930s. And it is innocence lost that gives this absorbing drama an emotional kick.

Martin, whose previous documentaries *Jisoe* (2005) and *Lionel* (2008) tracked, respectively, an Australian graffiti artist and an Aboriginal boxer, begins his adroit assemblage of archive footage at Prahran Skate Park, Melbourne, in 1988. Tas tells how he and his younger brother Ben visit the park each day after school, skating for fun. The boys escape their parents' violent rowing by hanging out with a makeshift family, proud to be "freaks to everyone else". By the time they are competing in the 1989 Australasian Skateboard Championship, they are routinely partying with 30-year-olds and using Class-A drugs.

Wizard of Aus: Tas Pappas

The real action, though, is in America, where the boys' introduction of street tricks to 'vert' skating (performed on a vertical ramp or 'half-pipe') relegates US legend Tony Hawk to number three in the world rankings. After telling Hawk "fuck off old man, you're over", the inexorable decline hits fast, with the brothers gorging on speed, acid, Xanax, *Scarface*-sized mounds of cocaine and, in Ben's case, heroin (Dionysian party images are as much in evidence as seesawing action footage). Their descent is propelled by wealth and ego, certainly, but also by evangelical rage as their beloved sport is besmirched by corporate greed and as their suspicions grow that their national identity causes mistreatment at the hands of competition judges.

Throughout, Tas's narration and straight-to-camera confessions are startlingly frank, balancing any complaints of injustice with excoriating self-flagellation, and his pain at Ben's degeneration and unexplained death in 2007 is palpable. *All This Mayhem* closes with a sliver of optimism – Tas is out of jail, clean, a father who sees his brother in his son, and skating once more – and it is to the film's credit that we cling to the hope with desperate ferocity.

Credits and Synopsis

Producers
George Pank
Eddie Martin
James Gay-Rees
Director of Photography
Germain McMicking
Editor
Chris King
Original Music Composed by
Jed Kurzel
Sound Designer
Nick Batterham

©Pank & Martin Pty Ltd, Adelaide Film Festival, Screen Queensland Pty Ltd and Screen Australia

Production Companies
Screen Australia and Pank & Martin present in association with Vice and The Adelaide Film Festival and Screen Queensland a Pank & Martin film
Financed in association with Fulcrum Media Finance
In association with DeLuxe
Developed, financed and produced with the assistance of Screen Queensland
Produced with the assistance of The Adelaide Film Festival
Principle Investor: Screen Australia
Executive Producers
Eddie Moretti
Shane Smith
Ken Marshall
Jude Troy
Rachel Okine

Dolby Digital
In Colour [1.85:1]

Distributor
Koch Media

Melbourne, Australia, 1989. Brothers Tas and Ben Pappas compete against the world's best at the Australasian Skateboard Championship and are highly placed. In 1992, aged 16, Tas flies to Tampa, Florida. His skills on the vertical ramp get him noticed. Ben flies out to join him. The brothers spend three years on the competition circuit until, in 1995, they join the newly formed Platinum team. Tas takes top spot at the 1996 World Championship in LA and the brothers are ranked numbers one and two in the world.

With their reputations and egos skyrocketing, they escalate their partying until they are kicked off the Platinum team. In 1999, Ben is arrested at Melbourne airport with 103 grams of cocaine in his trainers. Banned from the US, he turns to anti-depressants, then heroin. Tas enters a relationship, becomes a father and skates demonstrations to support his family. He takes speed to numb the pain of his injuries and spends time in jail. In 2007, the battered body of Ben's partner, a fellow junkie, is found in Melbourne. Ben, the prime suspect, disappears; his own body is discovered a week later. Tas is deported back to Australia. Estranged from his family and grieving for his brother, he finds his drug use increasing. He is arrested for possession of cocaine and sentenced to three years in a correctional centre.

Released in 2012, he has a child with a new partner and returns to skating, inventing a flip called 'The Mayhem'.

The Anomaly

United Kingdom/USA 2014
Director: Noel Clarke
Certificate 15 96m 36s

Reviewed by Sophie Ivan

You can't fault *The Anomaly* for ambition; or, for that matter, its star and director Noel Clarke, who has racked up an impressive number of credits – as director, producer, writer and actor – since his screenwriting debut *Kidulthood* marked him out as a determined young voice in British film in 2006. Unfortunately, ambition is about the only thing *The Anomaly* has going for it. A Frankenstein's monster of a high-concept, shoestring sci-fi thriller, it begs, borrows and steals from numerous superior films – though *Source Code*, the Bourne trilogy and *Memento* provide the vital organs and dread animating force.

Clarke plays a former soldier, who through some fuzzy logic divines that he is the subject of a mind-control plot masterminded by an evil scientist (Brian Cox, in a suspiciously brief cameo). Simon Lewis's script provides the real grand guignol element though, torturously playing for time until the denouement via repetitive sub-*Matrix* slow-mo punch-up sequences featuring badly dressed Russian pimps and barely dressed prostitutes – plus the odd waterboarding scene, presumably intended to add political edge to proceedings. This dawdling is ironic given that time is so precious for Clarke's character, who is limited to periods of nine minutes and 47 seconds of consciousness before his mind is repeatedly 'reset'. If only it were so easy to wipe the viewer's memory.

Credits and Synopsis

Produced by
James Harris
Mark Lane
Noel Clarke
Written by
Simon Lewis
Additional material by Noel Clarke
Director of Photography
David Katznelson
Film Editor
Tommy Boulding
Production Designer
Paul Burns
Original Music and Score
Tom Linden
Sound Recordist
Ashok-Kumar Kumar
Costume Designer
Andy Blake

©Anomaly Picture Company

Production Companies
Universal Pictures in association with The Fizz Facility an Unstoppable Entertainment and The Tea Shop & Film Company production
Executive Producers
Ali Cook
James Atherton
Robert Jones
Katie Croxson
Susan Monaco
Saul Haydon Rowe
Johnny Fewings
Josh Varne

CAST
Ian Somerhalder Harkin
Alexis Knapp Dana
Noel Clarke Ryan
Luke Hemsworth Agent Elkin
Ali Cook Agent Travis
Brian Cox Langham
Niall Greig Fulton Leonid
Michael Bispling Sergio
Art Parkinson Alex
Reuben Dabrow Polska

In Colour [2.35:1]

Distributor
Metrodome Distribution Ltd

UK, the near future. Ex-soldier Ryan wakes up to learn that he has kidnapped a young boy, and has only nine minutes and 47 seconds to piece together his situation. Each time those minutes elapse, he 'wakes up' again, sometimes weeks later, in a new location. Gradually, he discovers that he is the guinea pig in a mind-control experiment masterminded by scientist Langham and his son, who intend to create human 'drones'. With the help of Dana, a prostitute he confides in, Ryan kills the Langhams and saves the kidnapped boy.

Art Party

United Kingdom 2014
Directors: Tim Newton, Bob and Roberta Smith
Certificate 15 83m 15s

Reviewed by Hannah McGill

"My father was very anti-play," recalls the artist Cornelia Parker, interviewed in the course of this part-fictional provocation on the relationship between artists and the political establishment. The film has its own anti-play father figure in the shape of the former Secretary of State for Education Michael Gove, whose efforts to sideline art and design study in favour of 'traditional' rote learning are presented as a dire threat to the conditions that have historically allowed Parker and others like her to 'play' creatively and thus to thrive as artists.

The titular party was a real event, a conference/demonstration/art happening conceived by Bob and Roberta Smith (the artistic identity of Patrick Brill) and held in the English seaside resort of Scarborough in November 2013. The attendance of an arts-averse education secretary who first goes native and then appears to punish himself for his philistinism by committing suicide is, needless to say, fantasy, with actor John Voce portraying the thinly veiled 'Michael Grove MP'.

Putting words in an opponent's mouth and then jeering them hardly makes for a mature or constructive argument. Nor does bitching about his mode of dress (Bob and Roberta Smith's open letter to Gove takes repeated pops at the man's choice of ties, while arguing in the same breath for every child's right to control their own images and define themselves) or providing attendees with ingredients to make an edible portrait of him. And the arguments put forward by interviewees are often contradictory – being 'creative' is infinitely superior to striving to make money but people deserve money for doing it; art is in the DNA, inevitable and irrepressible, but will die out without government subsidy – or plain silly. If art education is cut back, claims sculptor Richard Wentworth, "people won't love each other any more; they won't even know how to hold hands." A busker called Flame Proof Moth assails 'Grove' with a ditty called 'Women Should Be in Charge', which conveniently

The war of art: John Voce

ignores the fact that the real Gove's approach was in no small part modelled for him by a woman in charge named Margaret Thatcher.

But mature and constructive isn't really the point here, and nor is not being silly. The right to be slapdash, childlike, inconsistent and unproductive, as opposed to pursuing conformity and convention all the way to being a 'worker drone', is precisely what is being defended. The film can thus feel almost defiantly self-defeating. It goes out of its way, with its bunting, burlesque, fancy dress and deliberately insubstantial political cartooning, to affirm the lowest opinions of those who might oppose its argument: that art schools foster infantilism, self-indulgence and citizens who disdain 'the system' while leaning on it for subsidy. It's not so much speaking truth to power as shouting "YOU WOULDN'T UNDERSTAND" at power before slamming the bedroom door in its face. Cathartic, in other words, and quite possibly valid, but perhaps not the best strategy in an argument over pocket money.

The self-confident buoyancy of the thing is energising, however, and there are wise comments from a number of contributors, including the painter and teacher Pavel Büchler, who cautions: "Art is a serious business; let's be serious about it."

Credits and Synopsis

Produced by
Tim Newton
Bob and Roberta Smith
Written by
Tim Newton
Bob and Roberta Smith
Principal Cameras
Mike Fox
Andy Parkinson
Jason Read
Mark Sydserff
Film Editor
Tim Newton
Chief Sound Recordist
Clive Copland

©Tim Newton & Bob and Roberta Smith

Production Companies
A film by Tim Newton and Bob and Roberta Smith
Supported using public funding by Arts Council England Art Fund, Crescent Arts, DACS – Design and Artists Copyright Society, Scarborough Borough Council, Sir John Cass Faculty of Art, Architecture and Design, Sheffield International Venues
Executive Producer
Stuart Cameron

CAST
John Voce
Michael Grove MP
Julia Rayner
Hetty Nettleship
Tim Siddall
The Flameproof Moth
Joana Borja
student interviewer
Norman Mine
Italian artist
Michael Upton
Cass tutor
Theo Newton
Theo Nettleship
Eileen Newton
David Newton
neighbours

In Colour
Distributor
Cornerhouse

Documentary footage with fictionalised elements. In response to the reduction of art practice in school curricula by former Secretary of State for Education Michael Gove, the artist Bob and Roberta Smith organises an 'Art Party' in Scarborough to draw public attention to the importance of art. Meanwhile, a fictionalised version of the Secretary of State, 'Michael Grove', puts the finishing touches to his education reforms with his assistant Hetty. Invited to the Art Party, he intends to decline but an unsuccessful interview on a student television programme prompts him to put his case to the creative community. At the Art Party, artists perform and speak, and are interviewed on camera about the importance of art training. Bob and Roberta Smith reads out an open letter to Michael Gove. 'Grove' makes a speech in which he accuses artists of being lazy and economically unproductive, and is booed. Hetty attacks him for his negativity. Confronted by caricatures and smashed figurines of himself, 'Grove' becomes dizzy and distraught. He embraces an artist and allows another to paint on his body, before taking to the stage and pogoing with Bob and Roberta Smith's band. In the morning, he awakes in a pile of detritus outside the venue. He walks to the seashore and enters the sea. Hetty, looking for him, finds his belongings on the beach.

Blood Ties

France/USA 2013
Director: Guillaume Canet
Certificate 15 128m 5s

Reviewed by Violet Lucca

A remake of the 2008 French policier *Les Liens du sang*, Guillaume Canet's drama about brothers on different sides of the law was ferried across the Atlantic with the assistance of James Gray (*The Yards*, *The Immigrant*), whose input is as evident in the finer emotional exchanges as in the locations. Despite using warehouses that are a little too freshly painted for the 1970s go-to-hell-era New York in which the film is set, we're thoroughly immersed in a Brooklyn that's far removed from the condos and artisanal eateries of the present or an *American Hustle*-style version of the period as one long sex-and-drug-fuelled consequence-free party. (The 'good time, all the time' myth is shattered in the first scene, when Ace Frehley's 'Back in the New York Groove' is yanked off a record player following an unsuccessful police raid that leaves one man dead.)

But the dynamic between criminal Chris (Clive Owen), cop Frank (Billy Crudup), their tough-as-nails sister Marie (Lili Taylor) and dying patriarch Leon (James Caan) never coheres because of faulty accents (Owen always seems to falter over his "fucks", Crudup is somewhere between Chic*ahy*go and B*aw*ston) and a compulsion to give the actors the chewiest scenes possible at the expense of all else. At Thanksgiving, Frank, Chris and Leon watch on television as police raid the Symbionese Liberation Army compound, which sparks an argument that's intended to emphasise character but instead nosedives into caricature. "Take ya turkey and shove it up ya fuckin' ass," barks Chris at his sister's pleas for peace. You don't need to have a bullying meathead in your family to know that this sort of holiday outburst is believable, but nothing else during the scene really serves a larger point or reveals any profound truth. At over two hours, there certainly are more than enough attempts at 'mood for mood's sake' moments, more useless than not.

There isn't much here, either, for those who subscribe to gunplay instead of 'slow cinema', as the action scenes are tamely choreographed. Some of this can be ascribed to the time – it was a lot easier to rob a bank in 1974 than it is now – but one bloodbath in Greenpoint feels like an early videogame mission and uses such bad post-production CGI that it comes across as goofy. Similarly, Canet lingers a little too long on some reaction shots (before or

Small-crime crooks: Clive Owen, Mila Kunis

after a moment of particularly ironic sex or violence), momentarily pushing the film into the awkward rather than the savoury.

Deservedly or not, the French refer to Gray as '*le Scorsese russe*', and the use of pop music here certainly aspires to the original's wall-of-sound approach. (A tinny cover of 'Then He Kissed Me' plays while Chris successfully picks up his much younger co-worker.) Nearly always surprising, the songs give a rhythm or counterpoint to the action that's refreshing. *Blood Ties* may not always be entirely satisfying but it's an interesting experiment in bringing together aesthetic impulses that would otherwise be separate; it's just a shame they don't comment on or connect with each other more.

Credits and Synopsis

Produced by
John Lesher
Christopher Woodrow
Hugo Selignac
Guillaume Canet
Alain Attal
Screenplay
Guillaume Canet
James Gray
Based on the movie *Les Liens du sang* by Jacques Maillot
Screenplay by Jacques Maillot, Pierre Chosson and Eric Veniard
Based on the novel *Deux frères, flic et truand* written by Michel Papet, Bruno Papet
Director of Photography
Christophe Offenstein
Film Editor
Hervé De Luze
Production Designer
Ford Wheeler
Original Score
Yodelice
Production Sound Mixer
Michael Barosky
Costume Designer
Michael Clancy

©Les Productions du Trésor, Caneo Films, France 2 Cinéma, Mars Films, Wild Bunch, Chi-Fou-Mi Productions, LGM Cinéma, Treasure Company, Le Grisbi Productions

Production Companies
Les Productions du Trésor and Caneo Films present a Les Productions du Trésor, Worldview Entertainment, Cameo Films, Mars Films, Wild Bunch, Le Grisbi Productions, France 2 Cinéma, Chi-Fou-Mi Productions, LGM Cinéma, Treasure Company co-production
With the participation of Canal+, Cine+, France Televisions, M6, France 4, W9
In association with Wild Bunch
Executive Producers
Kerry Orent
Christopher Goode
James Gray
Vincent Maraval
Molly Conners
Sarah Johnson Redlich
Maria Cestone
Hoyt David Morgan

CAST
Clive Owen
Chris
Billy Crudup
Frank Pierzynski
Marion Cotillard
Monica
Mila Kunis
Natalie
Zoe Saldana
Vanessa
Matthias Schoenaerts
Scarfo
Noah Emmerich
Lieutenant Connellan
Lili Taylor
Marie
Domenick Lombardozzi
Mike
John Ventimiglia
Valenti
Jamie Hector
Nick
Griffin Dunne
McNally
Yul Vazquez
Fabio De Soto
James Caan
Leon

Dolby Digital
In Colour
[2.35:1]

Distributor
Lionsgate UK

Brooklyn, 1974. Despite weak evidence, police officer Frank Pierzynski arrests Scarfo, who is married to Frank's ex-girlfriend Vanessa. The next day, Frank's brother Chris leaves prison on a work-release programme. They visit their ailing father, as well as Chris's children and addict/prostitute ex-wife Monica. Frank secures Chris a job at a garage, where Chris meets co-worker Natalie. As Chris struggles to stay straight, Frank continues to follow Vanessa, begging her to take him back. Eventually she relents. Chris teams up with an old crime buddy to start a hot-dog stand but after their application is denied, they return to paid hits, robbery and running a brothel. After Frank lets Chris go during a heist, he resigns from the force. Frank doesn't attend Chris and Natalie's wedding but uses an old code to let Chris know that the police are going to bust him. Despite being tailed by police, Chris stops Scarfo from shooting Frank and Vanessa. Chris is arrested.

The Congress

Israel/Germany/Belgium/Luxembourg/Poland/France/India 2013
Director: Ari Folman
Certificate 15 122m 49s

Reviewed by Nick Bradshaw

Ari Folman's futurist blowout is a grand folly that will exasperate and bore those who lean towards artistic discipline but may endear itself to those who like their dystopic visions eye-popping and brain-melting. Like Folman's celebrated *Waltz with Bashir* (2008), it juggles the registers of live-action documentary and psychic animation; unlike that film, this epically unconsolidated gambit feels like hard work, across both its production and its viewing, not least when it involves the erasure of space, time, identity and motivation. These are rediscovered in the third act, which reaches improbably for an emotional kick (and Max Richter's score gives it an ill-deserved leg up, though Richter and star Robin Wright's cover of Dylan's *Forever Young* is less advised). But by this point I was rooting for the film as a plucky if hapless underdog to make it to the finishing line in any state at all.

There are three guide rails to grasp here. One is the live actors. Wright, playing a surrogate of herself whose digital likeness is preserved for a future Hollywood, brings in some mischievous extratextuality (the star of *The Princess Bride* and *Forrest Gump* has made some bad choices, in movies and men, we're told). Kodi Smit-McPhee (*The Road*, *Let Me In*) lends a beguiling note as Wright's otherworldly son Aaron, flying his red kite of freedom while all around him are losing their heads. And Sami Gayle as sassy daughter Sarah is let go of too easily. The bigger names, however, struggle with Folman's penchant for feeding them soliloquies (and Nili Feller's wooden editing thereof). Harvey Keitel as Wright's agent Al sounds a lot of odd notes that don't make a melody; and Danny Huston essays his umpteenth version of studio-suit smarm, such that it's hard to believe the film can't just denote it. But Folman wants to show us as well as lecture us about the photographic heritage of cinema before he kicks it off the cliff.

The second guide for us to grasp is Stanislaw Lem's 1971 novel *The Futurological Congress*, on which the screenplay is based and which seems to dictate the film's breathless second-act plunge down the rabbit hole, as well as meshing with Folman's own ideas about the coming psycho-pharma-entertainment complex (underscored by less than subtle imagery of Huston in Gestapo gear and his customers as prisoners of war). And Wright's eventual flight into memory is reminiscent of *Solaris*, among much else.

The third is the history of Hollywood, from Wright's self-persona and Huston's genealogy to the sunshine-and-noir story of technological progress and ensuing human redundancy. (We meet a former DP lucky to have found work as a digital scanning director, and the digital Robin's animator, who has fallen for her after decades of pulling her strings.) It's also there in the visuals, not least the lysergic-spectacular animation, which gambols through stylings from Hirschfield, Fleischer, Disney and Chuck Jones to *Yellow Submarine*, Satoshi Kon and Miyazaki Hayao. (Folman's chemically distracted future looks a lot like Hollywood Boulevard, populated with cod-celebs from Jesus to Frida Kahlo, Tom Cruise to Grace Jones.) The plot evokes 1988's *Who Framed Roger Rabbit*, of course, but sprawls itself across the terrain of Hollywood satires and consumer-culture sci-fi: *Simone*, *Strange Days*, *Holy Motors*, *A Scanner Darkly*, *Fahrenheit 451*, *Brave New World* etc, etc... Its problem, in this vast, liquid echo chamber, is establishing its own character, stakes or resonance amid its ersatz evocations.

Credits and Synopsis

Produced by
Ari Folman
Reinhard Brundig
Robin Wright
Written by
Ari Folman
Based on the book *The Futurological Congress* by Stanislaw Lem
Director of Photography
Michal Englert
Editor
Nili Feller
Production Designer
David Polonsky
Music Composed and Orchestrated by
Max Richter
Supervising Sound Editor
Aviv Aldema
Costume Designer
Mandi Line
Director of Animation
Yoni Goodman

©Bridgit Folman Film Gang, Pandora Film, Entre Chien et Loup, Paul Thiltges Distributions, Opus Film, ARP Sélection

Production Companies
The Match Factory, Bridgit Folman Film Gang and Pandora Film present an Ari Folman film
In co-production with Entre Chien et Loup, Paul Thiltges Distributions, Opus Film, ARP, ARD Degeto, Cinemorphic, Sikhya Entertainment, Canal+ Poland, Silesia Film Fund, RTBF, Belgacom, France 2 Cinéma
With the participation of Wallimage
Produced with the support of Film and Audiovisual Centre of Wallonia Brussels Federation, Belgian Federal Government Tax Shelter, Casa Kafka Pictures
Executive Producers
Jeremiah Samuels
Michael Weber
Film Extracts
Dr. Strangelove or: How I Learned to Stop Worrying and Love the Bomb (1963)

CAST
Robin Wright
herself
Harvey Keitel
Al
Jon Hamm
voice of Dylan Truliner
Kodi Smit-McPhee
Aaron Wright
Danny Huston
Jeff Green
Sami Gayle
Sarah
Michael Stahl-David
Steve
Paul Giamatti
Dr Barker
Michael Landes
Maxi
Sarah Shahi
Michelle

Dolby Digital
In Colour and Black and White
[1.85:1]

Distributor
Studiocanal Limited

Israeli theatrical title
Kennes ha'atidanim

Robin Wright is an actress whose star has ebbed in middle age; she now lives in a refurbished airplane hangar in southern California with her teenage children Aaron, who has a degenerative brain condition, and Sarah. Encouraged by her agent Al, Robin reluctantly accepts an offer from Jeff Green, head of Miramount Studios, to sell her digitally scanned likeness to the studio, which is focusing on post-photographic computer-generated animation, and retire from acting for 20 years.

Two decades later, the animated Robin checks into the Futurological Congress at a towering hotel in the desert. Behind the scenes, Green puts to her another groundbreaking offer: Miramount-Nagasaki, now a pharmaceutical-entertainment conglomerate, wishes to market the chemical formula for Robin Wright to escapist consumers. Robin denounces the idea during its presentation at the convention, shortly before rebel protesters attack the hotel. Suffering hallucinogenic poisoning, fought over by the rival camps (at least in her mind), Robin is cryogenically frozen by her animator-turned-guardian Dylan, until a time when medicine can cure her.

She is revived in a facsimile of the 1980s. Dylan takes her on a tour of the new post-conflict world. Missing Aaron, she takes a pill that allows her to cross back to the true world. She finds Aaron's aged physician Dr Barker, who tells her that Aaron only recently lost hope of her return and himself disappeared into the chemical dream world. Robin takes a pill, becomes Aaron and follows him through his life's journey.

Dawn of the Planet of the Apes

USA 2014
Director: Matt Reeves
Certificate 12A 130m 16s

Reviewed by Kim Newman

Spoiler alert: this review reveals a plot twist

After the botch of Tim Burton's 2001 remake/reboot of Franklin J. Schaffner's *Planet of the Apes* (1968), Rupert Wyatt's 2011 *Rise of the Planet of the Apes* (sensitively scripted by Rick Jaffa and Amanda Silver, who return here, with Mark Bomback, and rate a 'characters created by' credit) cleverly set out not to redo an accepted classic. Instead it drew on elements from J. Lee Thompson's seldom highly regarded sequel *Conquest of the Planet of the Apes* (1972), while envisioning an alternate route from the present day to the topsy-turvy dystopia where smart apes abuse dumb humans and embody the worst elements (cruelty, superstition, militarism) of the civilisation they have supplanted. For *Dawn of the Planet of the Apes*, with Matt Reeves (*Cloverfield*) taking over as director, the model is Thompson's scarcely rated at all *Battle for the Planet of the Apes* (1973), last gasp of the original *Apes* cycle. The adage that it makes more sense to remake a poor film than a great one is borne out, as this takes the basic premise of *Battle* – the tipping of a balance between ragged human survivors and rising ape civilisation, and the clash between good and bad ape leaders – and makes forceful, intelligent science-fiction drama out of what was once a silly runaround with monkey masks and celebrity cameos.

Almost the only element of *Battle* that even *Apes* devotees remember is the slogan "ape shall not kill ape" (with its shock corollary "ape has killed ape!"). Chalked on a stone as one of the fundamental tenets of a tribe of apes living in the forests north of San Francisco, the slogan becomes the wellspring of this new story. The escalating clashes of competitor species take a backseat to the differences between Caesar, the strong but sensitive leader of the tribe, raised by well-intentioned and loving humans, and scarred and cunning Koba, extensively tortured in a human laboratory – characters well established in *Rise* who now literally get to walk on their own two legs, developing logically given their varying experiences with people. Throughout the film, the ape leads become more manlike, speaking rather than signing, using weapons, bending the laws of the tribe to their own ends. As Koba becomes a self-serving assassin – one element retained from Burton's film is that chimpanzees show credible strategic viciousness, whereas the earlier entries had a division between peacenik chimps and militarist gorillas – Caesar becomes a politician and general, realising that "apes will always follow the strongest."

The unique element the *Apes* saga has among science-fiction/fantasy/blockbuster franchises is that each entry is fundamentally a tragedy. The Swiftian satire of Rod Serling and Michael Wilson's adaptation of Pierre Boulle's novel leads up to Charlton Heston's agony of understanding when he sees the shattered Statue of Liberty. Here, Caesar – a character named by Paul Dehn (screenwriter of the 1970s *Apes* sequels), who might have remembered that one of Heston's signature roles was Antony – combines the best of humanity and ape, and is opposed by Koba, who combines the worst. Unlike Brutus, Koba is a dishonourable assassin – but he achieves the same end, perpetuating his enemy's power

Fur and loathing: Jason Clarke

base, though this Caesar survives to become his own Antony. That Caesar finds a get-out clause in the apes' fundamental law, declaring "you are not ape" as he lets Koba die, demonstrates his understanding that he must be a ruthless warrior and indeed a tyrant to fight a war he didn't want to start but knows he needs to finish. It's a triumph, but not remotely a happy ending.

Rise devoted much of its time to foreshadowing and emotional content before delivering a terrific action sequence – a battle between apes and cops on Golden Gate Bridge. *Dawn* opens by establishing a society of signing-with-subtitles apes and a complex set of relationships and resentments within the tribe. The primacy of Andy Serkis's mo-cap performance as Caesar is challenged by equally astonishing work from Toby Kebbell as Koba and Nick Thurston as Caesar's conflicted son Blue Eyes. This franchise has always combined its playfulness and pessimistic vision with dynamic, pulp adventure action, and Reeves doesn't short-change the summer audience. The first shock image of Schaffner's film was a gun-toting ape on horseback, recreated en masse here as Koba leads a simian cavalry charge through a wall of flame. The sort of in-the-thick-of-battle tracking camera and stuntwork among explosions seen in *Children of Men* is applied remarkably to an ape invasion of the overgrown ruins of San Francisco.

Unlike many other current CGI-heavy blockbusters, *Dawn* never loses sight of the characters inside the pixels. Indeed, though it has space for Gary Oldman moved to tears by a suddenly powered-up tablet, its most memorable characters are the product of acting augmented by effects. At one point, Koba cannily impersonates a Cheetah-like crowd-pleasing idiot chimp in order to get close enough to humans to steal a gun and kill them. This astonishingly well-realised sequence demonstrates just how nuanced mo-cap performance can be, and how much dramatic potential there is in wizardry too often used simply to smash cities.

Credits and Synopsis

Produced by
Peter Chernin
Dylan Clark
Rick Jaffa
Amanda Silver
Written by
Mark Bomback
Rick Jaffa
Amanda Silver
Based on characters created by Rick Jaffa, Amanda Silver
Director of Photography
Michael Seresin
Film Editors
William Hoy
Stan Salfas
Production Designer
James Chinlund
Music
Michael Giacchino
Sound Mixer
Ed White
Costume Designer
Melissa Bruning
Visual Effects & Animation Created by
Weta Digital Ltd
Stunt Co-ordinators
Charlie Croughwell
Terry Notary

©Twentieth Century Fox Film Corporation and TSG Entertainment Finance LLC (in all territories except Brazil, Italy, Japan, Korea and Spain)
©TCF Hungary Film Rights Exploitation Limited Liability Company, Twentieth Century Fox Film Corporation and TSG Entertainment Finance LLC (in Brazil, Italy, Japan, Korea and Spain)

Production Companies
Twentieth Century Fox presents in association with TSG Entertainment a Chernin Entertainment production
Produced in association with Down Productions
Executive Producers
Thomas M. Hammel
Mark Bomback
Jenno Topping

CAST
Andy Serkis
Caesar
Jason Clarke
Malcolm
Gary Oldman
Dreyfus
Keri Russell
Ellie
Toby Kebbell
Koba
Kodi Smit-McPhee
Alexander
Kirk Acevedo
Carver
Jon Eyez
Foster
Enrique Murciano
Kemp
Keir O'Donnell
Finney
Kevin Rankin
McVeigh
Jocko Sims
Werner
Nick Thurston
Blue Eyes
Karin Konoval
Maurice

Dolby Atmos
In Colour
[1.85:1]

Some screenings presented in 3D

Distributor
20th Century Fox International (UK)

The near future. A viral drug intended to treat Alzheimer's raises the intelligence of infected apes but wipes out most of the human population.

Ten years later, chimpanzee Caesar – first of the sapient apes – is the benevolent ruler of a tribe living in the forests north of San Francisco. Dreyfus, leader of a surviving human community, sends his friend Malcolm into the forest to reactivate a hydroelectric dam and provide power for the city. Despite interspecies distrust, Caesar agrees to help Malcolm in his mission. Koba, a militant ape, shoots Caesar, apparently killing him, and blames humans. He then leads an army against San Francisco, stealing guns from the city armoury and overwhelming the human defenders. Blue Eyes, Caesar's son, supports Koba but is disillusioned when the latter imprisons dissident apes, including orang-utan Maurice, Caesar's closest adviser. Caesar (who has survived) works with Malcolm to free Koba's ape and human prisoners. Malcolm fails to dissuade Dreyfus from blowing up a skyscraper taken over by the apes. During the destruction, Caesar defeats Koba in single combat and again becomes leader of the tribe, but realises that war with humans has begun. The apes bow before Caesar.

Delight

United Kingdom/Bosnia-Herzegovina 2013
Director: Gareth Jones
Certificate 15 105m 19s

Reviewed by Hannah McGill

Those who have survived through wars carry guilt, bear scars and can be prone to sudden bouts of irrational and self-destructive behaviour. The same might be said of those who have survived long marriages... Emma (Jeanne Balibar), a veteran of both, seeks escape from the latter by plunging herself into memories of the former in this breathy PTSD potboiler. In search of her former lover Jo, a fellow war photographer, Emma pitches up at his rural Welsh farm, only to learn of his death (seemingly a significant enough event to have drawn police, journalists and fortune-hunters, but not to have reached her ears). Despite having her two adolescent children in tow, she instantly enters into a nuzzly romance with Jo's son Zachary (Gavin Fowler), a puffy-faced lad of no great smarts who doesn't mind that she slept with his dad, wants to be known as 'Echo' and is prone to bouts of shouting and walking into the sea. By the time Emma's husband Gregor (Tim Dutton) arrives to fetch her home, she and Zachary are playing happy families with his children in a variety of local picnic spots. Not only her safety and stability are at risk, Gregor reveals: some of Emma and Jo's activities in Chechnya are being investigated by an international war crimes tribunal. She might be well advised to come home. Her children probably need to go back to school, or at least change their clothes. But she's fallen in love... and the film is quite clear on where this should sit in her list of priorities, compared to her marriage, her mental health or the welfare of her kids.

How one returns to a normal life after extreme experience, and indeed how anyone gives up past excitements in favour of a humdrum middle age, is diligently explored here. But the fact that the film backs to the hilt the selfish flightiness of a protagonist who comes across as an insubstantial tangle of pretensions and self-regarding neurosis gives the whole enterprise a predictable trajectory, and a hollow heart. "She has post-traumatic stress disorder," Gregor explains. "Don't stick labels on her!" cries Zachary, who presumably intends to shag her back to full functionality. Balibar, meanwhile, plays Emma in a manner so melodramatic – panting, rolling her eyes, ending lines like "You killed me that night, and brought me back to life, and I'm not the same!" in wheezy giggles – that it's tempting to suppose she's inviting us to laugh; but the ultra-solemn tone of the material suggests not.

Photosynthesis: Jeanne Balibar, Gavin Fowler

The film has a highly peculiar relationship with communications technology, seeming to take place in a contemporary world in which digital photography and video have been only half-invented, mobile phones are a rarity and the internet doesn't exist at all. "We don't get the news over here," Emma claims at one point. They're in Wales. "Exclusive! I'll dictate it myself!" shouts Gregor down his mobile phone, to show that he's an important, nasty journalist. (He's actually the only character who seems to be living in any approximation of a real world, and is a good deal more sympathetic than the awful Emma or her dim-bulb toy boy.) It all feels creaky, self-conscious and very far from life, especially the whispery voices on the soundtrack that signal Emma's encroaching madness, and the freeze frames when she takes her endless snaps.

Credits and Synopsis

Produced by
Fiona Howe
Producers
Fiona Howe
Gareth Jones
Written by/Story & Screenplay
Gareth Jones
Director of Photography
Alex Ryle
Picture Editor
George Pursall
Production Designer
Rupert Allan
Music Composer/ Music Performer
Fiona Howe
Sound Recordist
Charlie Weisfeld
Costume Designer
Andrea Wiltshire

©Scenario Films

Production Company
A Scenario Films production
A film by Gareth Jones
Co-producers:
Echo Art Films,
SaGa Production
Executive Producers
Anna Holburn
Marie Howe
David John
Mamta Kaash
Sarah Rouche
Steve White

CAST
Jeanne Balibar
Echo
Gavin Fowler
Zac
Tim Dutton
Gregor
Eiry Thomas
Glennis
Sue Jones-Davies
Grace
Naomi Everson
Lily
Iestyn Jones
Ieuan
Rupert Allan
Jo
Raphael Jones
Hector
Pandora Jones
Cassy

In Colour [2.35:1]

Distributor
Ballpark Film Distributors

Wales, the present. With her two children, war photographer Emma visits the home of her former lover Jo, only to be told by his son Zachary that he has taken his own life. Emma and Zachary sleep together; she tells him that her name is Echo. Jo's sister Glennis and her daughter Lily, who is in love with Zachary, are coldly suspicious of Emma, but she nevertheless decides to stay on with her children. She and Zachary grow closer, although she displays erratic behaviour. She looks through Jo's photographs and videos, and explains that he went too far in what he allowed to happen for his pictures. Emma's husband Gregor, a journalist, comes looking for her. He tells Zachary that she is suffering from PTSD and may be called to give evidence at an international war crimes tribunal about incidents that she and Jo recorded in Chechnya. Gregor orders Emma to come home with him but she refuses; the whole family join forces to chase Gregor away. Emma decides, with Zachary's support, to send Jo's Chechnyan footage to The Hague and bear the consequences.

Deliver Us from Evil

USA 2014
Director: Scott Derrickson
Certificate 15 118m 19s

Reviewed by Calum Marsh

Hellraiser: Inferno, the fifth instalment in the disreputable Clive Barker franchise and the direct-to-video debut of writer-director Scott Derrickson, remains, despite its B-movie pedigree, a strange and often quite beautiful film, making literal a debauched cop's personal demons like a schlock-horror variation on *Bad Lieutenant*. It's been 14 years since *Inferno* subverted the exploits of the demonic 'Pinhead' to more substantive ends, and Derrickson, now with five features under his belt, continues to surprise and confound. To briefly summarise: his résumé boasts a macabre legal thriller (*The Exorcism of Emily Rose*), a remake of a science-fiction classic (*The Day the Earth Stood Still*) and an exquisite, widely underappreciated haunted-house picture (*Sinister*). Now he returns with *Deliver Us from Evil*, his boldest, most mature film. Part police procedural, part possession story and altogether frightening, it feels in many respects like a culmination of his work to date, and is emphatic confirmation that he is a bona fide auteur.

Derrickson is first and foremost a genre filmmaker – a horror filmmaker in particular – but his sensibility, while certainly accessible, has always seemed notably off-trend. As the torture-porn vulgarity indulged by *Saw* and *Hostel* became fashionable during the mid-2000s, Derrickson proceeded to make a measured, sober exorcism film set principally in a courtroom. Likewise, as the found-footage trend popularised by *Paranormal Activity* reached its apotheosis several years ago, Derrickson receded into the long-antiquated tradition of the haunted-house ghost story, single-handedly exhuming the legacy of Jack Clayton in the process. These are the creative decisions of a director motivated more by personal conviction than careerism. Derrickson's latest film has been characterised, by American critics eager to pigeonhole it, as an attempt to combine the rain-slick policier investigations of a film such as *Zodiac* (2007) with the spectacular demonic possessions of *The Exorcist* (1973), and to an extent that's true. And, in the tension it develops between a broken, well-meaning cop and the pure evil he conspires to thwart, it warrants comparison with Michael Mann's *Manhunter* (1986) and the work of Thomas Harris. But beyond the obvious points of reference, *Deliver Us from Evil* proves rather more elusive. This film stands alone.

The framework seems familiar. Our hero is Ralph Sarchie (Eric Bana), an esteemed sergeant of the New York Police Department assailed, it seems, by the horrors he bears witness to daily. Sarchie's beat is the Bronx, and it's a tough one: we are introduced to him cradling the corpse of a baby left to die among alleyway trash, and we understand that for him this is hardly an unusual sight. We're firmly in noir territory, of course, and Bana's Sarchie, hollowed out and world-weary, brings to mind Robert Ryan in Nicholas Ray's *On Dangerous Ground* (1951), drifting through the downtown gloom as if forever resigned to haunt it. We follow Sarchie, alongside his partner Butler (Joel McHale), as the two investigate a number of seemingly unrelated cases: an unusual noise complaint, a violent domestic disturbance, attempted infanticide at the city

Absolution beginners: Eric Bana, Sean Harris, Joel McHale

zoo. But it soon transpires that these events share a somewhat oblique source of instigation: each involves the presence of a spectral figure named Santino (Sean Harris), whose influence looms over the crimes ominously.

As its title suggests, *Deliver Us from Evil* is less concerned with the wrongdoings of men than with the more elemental forces that animate them, and to this end it is also, in a meaningful sense, a religious film – or in any case a film with significant religious overtones. The story is derived from the real Ralph Sarchie's memoirs, *Beware the Night*, in which the former NYPD sergeant, now a self-described demonologist, details his apparently life-changing encounters with the paranormal. What's most fascinating about *Deliver Us from Evil*, perhaps, is the totally earnest approach Derrickson takes to the source material: rather than temper the story's fantasy elements to insulate Sarchie's testimony from the scepticism of non-believers, Derrickson doubles down on them, recasting ambiguously 'unexplainable' phenomena as outright horror-movie spectacle. There's little room for doubt: here man really does brush up against the devil.

But the credibility of Sarchie's story – that is, whether or not you believe that an ordinary cop confronted, and ultimately bested, a man possessed by a demon – isn't as relevant to Derrickson as the emotional and psychological change these events occasion. The film's central conflict is still essentially a spiritual one: this is the story of a lapsed Catholic coming to renounce evil and accept God. (The fact that Derrickson was raised a fundamentalist Christian and has spoken often of his relationship to Catholicism suggests that this dimension of the story is highly personal.) Sarchie is a man so beset by the ills of the world that he is alienated from himself, from his family, and from the very possibility of good. In a crucial scene, he tells a priest, Mendoza, that he cannot believe in a God who permits evil to thrive as it does. Mendoza directs him inwards: perhaps, he suggests, God is in the hearts of people like Sarchie, who put themselves on the line to stop it.

This is not to understate the excellence of *Deliver Us from Evil* as an exercise in genre: Derrickson is an exemplary craftsman, and both as a procedural and a horror movie this is a superb piece of work. But what has always distinguished Derrickson is the intelligence with which he furnishes his genre-movie frameworks, elevating the form by grounding the spectacle in something real. As in our nightmares, the things that go bump in the night in Derrickson's films stand for something deeper, something more intimate. Many films deal with demons. These ones are personal. S

Credits and Synopsis

Produced by
Jerry Bruckheimer
Screenplay
Scott Derrickson
Paul Harris Boardman
Based on the book by Ralph Sarchie, Lisa Collier Cool
Director of Photography
Scott Kevan
Editor
Jason Hellmann
Production Designer
Bob Shaw
Music
Christopher Young
Sound Design
Paul N.J. Ottoson
Costume Designer
Christopher Peterson

©Screen Gems, Inc.
Production Companies
Screen Gems and Jerry Bruckheimer Films present in association with LStar Capital a Scott Derrickson film
Executive Producers
Mike Stenson
Chad Oman
Paul Harris Boardman

CAST
Eric Bana
Ralph Sarchie
Edgar Ramírez
Mendoza
Olivia Munn
Jen
Chris Coy
Jimmy
Dorian Missick
Gordon
Sean Harris
Santino
Joel McHale
Butler
Mike Houston
Nadler
Lulu Wilson
Christina
Olivia Horton
Jane
Scott Johnsen
Lt Griggs
Daniel Sauli
Salvatore

Dolby Digital/ Datasat Digital Sound/SDDS
In Colour
[2.35:1]

Distributor
Sony Pictures Releasing

The Bronx, present day. NYPD sergeant Ralph Sarchie answers a domestic disturbance call with his partner Butler, and is injured as he tries to subdue the abusive husband. Later, Sarchie and Butler are called to the zoo, where a deranged mother has thrown her child into a lion's den. Sarchie spots a man painting the wall of the lion's den; the man flees. The following night, Sarchie visits a family complaining of noises in their basement. He discovers a corpse; the dead man, he learns, was in the army with the abusive husband and the painter. Mendoza, a priest, informs Sarchie that the painter has been possessed by a demon. He and Mendoza confront the painter in a police interrogation room and attempt to perform an exorcism.

Dinosaur 13

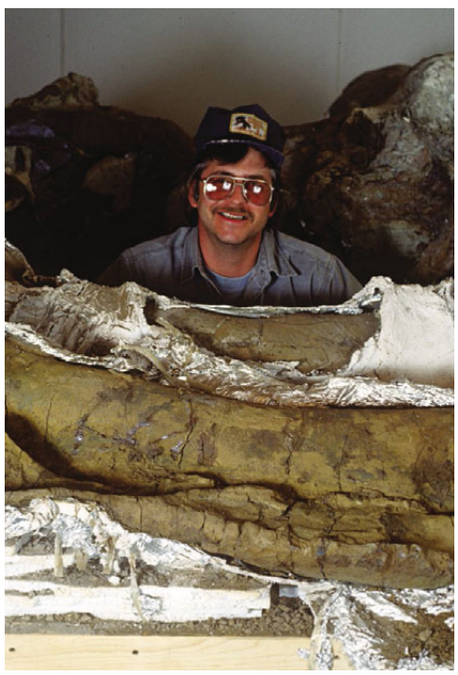
USA 2014
Director: Todd Douglas Miller

Reviewed by Ashley Clark

Todd Douglas Miller's enjoyable if biased documentary *Dinosaur 13* recounts the curious story of a small group of palaeontologists from the Black Hills Institute of South Dakota who, in August 1990, unearthed the largest, most complete Tyrannosaurus rex ever found: they subsequently named the skeleton 'Sue' after one of their number. Following a painstaking 17-day process of collecting and transporting the skeleton – depicted here in exciting archive footage – the team paid $5,000 to local landowner Maurice Williams, a member of a Sioux tribe, and planned to display Sue in their own small museum. The mission of these plucky diggers was compromised, however, when the FBI and the National Guard came to town to claim Sue on the grounds of "preserving scientific knowledge and integrity" and stored her at a nearby school. This government intervention prompted spirited local protest and kicked off a complex legal battle that would rumble on for almost a decade and take a number of unpredictable turns.

From its opening moments, *Dinosaur 13* aligns itself strongly with the palaeontologists, who come across as earnest, sympathetic, altruistic enthusiasts. The filmmakers' position is understandable given the reams of valuable, intimate archive footage the palaeontologists have handed over for use; their willingness to opine about the story in frequently emotional talking-head interviews; and the attractiveness of a small-town-versus-big-government narrative that's like something out of a 1930s Hollywood melodrama. It's hard not to become involved in the plight of head palaeontologist Larson and his team, so skilful is Miller's positioning of them as plucky underdogs. The director even inserts woozy, Malickian reconstructions of Larson's childhood to illustrate how deep his passions run.

Miller's approach becomes questionable, however, when the finer details of the case emerge. It takes almost an hour, for



Bone idol: Peter Larson

instance, for it to be revealed that the Black Hills Institute had been under investigation since as far back as the 1980s for illegally collecting on public land. It's a complex story without clear-cut heroes and villains – a fact that sits distinctly at odds with Miller's binary approach. *Dinosaur 13* gradually becomes over-reliant on dense, onscreen text captions to explain the story, and gets bogged down in uninvolving details as the case against Larson (which does seem alarmingly petty, it must be said) drags on. Miller also skirts over some genuinely intriguing stuff, such as the apparently deep schism between academic researchers and commercial palaeontologists like Larson; and most dismayingly of all, the role of Maurice Williams, who cannily outmanoeuvred the Black Hills crew and ultimately secured a bounty for his family.

Though *Dinosaur 13* is competently constructed and never less than watchable, Miller's rather pedestrian approach leaves one ruefully pondering how a more idiosyncratic filmmaker – say, a Werner Herzog or an Errol Morris – might have tackled the story. Miller seems set on banishing any trace of eccentricity from his film (perhaps because of an understandable desire not to patronise his subjects) but his story is full of peculiarities, from the obsessiveness of his palaeontologist subjects to the unlikely love affair that blossoms between Larson and an investigative journalist, and even the oddly fanatical US attorney Kevin Schieffer, who pursued the case with a puzzling vigour. Perhaps *Dinosaur 13*'s most notable feature is Thomas Petersen's sweeping cinematography, which reveals the foreboding beauty of the South Dakota badlands and lends the film a mythical dimension that's otherwise sorely absent.

Credits and Synopsis

Producer
Todd Douglas Miller
Based on the book *Rex Appeal: The Amazing Story of Sue, the Dinosaur That Changed Science, the Law, and My Life* by Peter Larson, Kristin Donnan
Director of Photography
Thomas Petersen
Editor
Todd Douglas Miller
Music
Matt Morton
Sound Designer
Eric Milano

©Dinosaur 13 LLC
Production Companies
A Statement Pictures production
A Todd Douglas Miller film
Supported by IFP

In Colour
[2.35:1]

Distributor
Dogwoof

A documentary about events surrounding the discovery in 1990 of the largest, most complete Tyrannosaurus rex ever found. In South Dakota, palaeontologist Peter Larson and his small team from the local Black Hills Institute unearthed the Tyrannosaurus rex and named it 'Sue'. However, in 1992 the FBI intervened and the National Guard raided the site where the Black Hills team were cleaning the bones: the fossil was seized and transferred to the South Dakota School of Mines and Technology. The film tracks the ensuing legal proceedings involving Larson's team and Maurice Williams, the Sioux landowner on whose property the skeleton had been found.

Larson spent 18 months in prison on charges of failing to complete customs documents. The dinosaur was eventually auctioned at Sotheby's in New York in 1997 and is now a permanent feature at the Field Museum in Chicago.

Finding Fela

Director: Alex Gibney

Shrine and song: Fela Kuti

Reviewed by Sam Davies

"The question they would always ask me was, 'Which three minutes do we put on the radio?'" says Rikki Stein, former manager of Nigerian musician and bandleader Fela Kuti. Stein admits that he never had an answer to this recurring question from record companies, who could see in Fela the potential to be a global star on the level of Bob Marley. And how do you extract three representative minutes from music like Fela's, with its tracks that build and build, gathering momentum with every added layer of percussion, horns, guitar, vocal chants, rejecting the neat verse-chorus pop package to extend to 20, 30, even 40 minutes?

It's a dilemma faced too by director Alex Gibney in *Finding Fela* – how to convey a full sense of the hypnotic, endless flow of Fela's music while also having to tell his life story. Of course it catches too the obvious dilemma of any biographical form: what to leave out. In the case of Fela Anikulapo Kuti, there is simply so much to put in.

Born in 1938, Fela grew up as part of the Nigerian elite: his mother was a pioneer in women's education, and playwright Wole Soyinka was a cousin. Sent to London to study medicine in 1958, Fela instead opted for music. He coined the term 'Afrobeat' in 1967, but it wasn't until a 1969 trip to the US that he found a style worthy of the name. Radicalised musically by the explosive intensity of James Brown and politically by the Afrocentric polemic of the Black Panthers and Malcolm X, Fela returned to Lagos and reinvented his group, grafting the sharper edges and pugilistic drive of American funk and R&B on to traditional African polyrhythms. But he also reinvented himself, ditching lyrics about soup for starkly direct attacks on government corruption. He became a musical idol and, through tracks such as 'Zombie', a demagogue, outlaw and self-styled people's president. At his Lagos club, the Shrine, his performances spun into improvised political sermons. Paul McCartney witnessed his band the Afrika '70 at the Shrine at this period and describes them here as possibly the most electrifying live act in the world.

The heart of Gibney's film portrays the extraordinary micro-society in Fela's Lagos compound, the 'Kalakuta Republic', which he ran like a state unto itself, and where his 27 wives bickered over conjugal access and assorted children mingled with band members and hangers-on. It was this compound that the Nigerian army raided in 1977, seriously injuring Fela and also his mother, who was thrown

Credits and Synopsis

Producer
Jack Gulick
Alex Gibney
Director of Photography
Maryse Alberti
Editor
Lindy Jankura
Sound
Tony Volante
Production Companies
A Jigsaw Prods. presentation in association with Knitting Factory Entertainment, Okayplayer, Okayafrica
Executive Producers
Ruth Hendel
Stephen Hendel

In Colour

Distributor
Dogwoof

A documentary exploring the life and work of Nigerian musician Fela Kuti, using archive footage and interviews with his friends, family and fellow musicians. The film explores Fela's roots in an influential Nigerian family and his subsequent emergence as musical hero, political radical and outspoken critic of the authoritarian Nigerian governments of the 70s and 80s. Woven into this is a behind-the-scenes look at Tony Award-winning Broadway musical 'Fela!', which itself tells the Fela Kuti story.

from a window and died shortly afterwards from complications. Fela simply fought on.

Gibney marshals all this material impressively. Previous films such as 2005's *Enron: The Smartest Guys in the Room* have shown his ability to sift and retell complex narratives. Here he can call on remarkable footage of Fela and the Afrika '70 in concert in Berlin in 1978, as well as newly discovered outtakes from previous Fela Kuti documentary *Music Is the Weapon*. The backyard agitprop visions of Fela's cover artist Lemi Ghariokwu and the recollections of Fela's sons Femi and Seun are neatly woven together with contributions from friends, fellow musicians and others. The cool, considered insights of scholar Michael Veal are particularly acute, noting the influence on Fela's vocal lines of his religious schooling, and also debunking wherever necessary (he dismisses Fela's claims that his 27 bigamous marriages were 'traditional' with cool efficiency).

Finding Fela fully earns its two-hour running time, and could easily have sustained more, such is the wealth of material and music, and such is the brisk momentum maintained by Gibney and editor Lindy Jankura. Gibney is careful never to sanctify or sanitise his subject: Fela's gross chauvinism and absence as a father are recorded. His death from an Aids-related illness is also discussed – whereas choreographer Bill T. Jones controversially excluded mention of this from his Broadway musical biography *Fela!*. Jones argues, with authority as an HIV-positive artist himself, that a diagnosis should not define an artist's life. Yet Fela's Aids denial, and his insistence that he only ever had 'healthy' sex, had terrible consequences beyond his own person, with a number of his wives becoming infected. Jones is a fascinating interviewee but unfortunately it's the scenes from his production that feel the most expendable here. *Finding Fela* was originally planned as a document of *Fela!*'s short 'homecoming' run in Lagos, only expanding to become a biographical piece as Gibney's research turned up more and more unseen archival footage. The film is at pains to point up parallels between its own investigation of Fela's personality and the explorations of his character caught in scenes of Jones developing the stage show. Yet whenever the action moved from biography to Broadway, whether on stage or behind the scenes, I found I was marking time until the film's true subject reappeared: every frame of *Fela!* after all is a frame less of Fela.

From a shocking early newsreel shot of a corpse in a ditch, what recurs throughout Gibney's film is the human body: bodies moved by music, bodies moving on stage, Fela's moves multiplied and echoed by his group and dancers, thousands crowding a stadium to catch a glimpse of Fela's body lying in state. But also the body resisting state oppression – Fela's lean welterweight physique is frequently on display, and in one disturbing scene he gives an interviewer a quick tour of the scars left on him by police and the military: a kind of rap sheet for an authoritarian state's violence written on his own frame. It's hard to think of a contemporary artist who has put their body on the line for their music and beliefs in quite the same way as Fela Anikulapo Kuti.

Goddess

Director: Mark Lamprell
Certificate 12A 104m 15s

Reviewed by Kate Stables

Adapted from Joanna Weinberg's Australian stage show *Sinksongs*, this jaunty but gossamer-thin musical comedy about the impossibility of 'having it all' never escapes its theatrical trappings. Aimed transparently at the *Mamma Mia!*-lovers among us, it's all terminally two-dimensional, right down to the Cruella De Vil-style advertising mogul tempting its heroine with global fame.

After opening promisingly with a wry, swooping *Sound of Music* visual gag, director Mark Lamprell gives everything a bouncily overlit, televisual feel. Stage star Laura Michelle Kelly puts commendable energy into the torn-and-talented Elspeth and the upbeat musical numbers spoofing female stereotypes, but housewives' choice Ronan Keating, cast as her affable husband, doesn't earn his keep whether warbling or wistful.

In order to sustain its giddy, sitcom version of *The Red Shoes* dilemma – diva versus dishcloth – the film has to present a tiresomely retro view of a mother's career choices. Similarly, the film's sideways look at the bitchy behaviour of toddler-group mums feels like preaching to the choir. Doris Day did it first and better as the housewife-turned-ad-sensation of *The Thrill of It All* (1963), a film whose Carl Reiner and Larry Gelbart script effortlessly trumps anything seen here.

Credits and Synopsis

Produced by
Richard Keddie
Andrena Finlay
Screenplay
Mark Lamprell
Joanna Weinberg
Based on the stage show and story written and performed by Joanna Weinberg
Director of Photography
Damian E. Wyvill
Edited by
Mark Warner
Production Designer
Annie Beauchamp
Composer
Bryony Marks
Sound Design
John Dennison
Tony Vaccher
Costume Designer
Shareen Beringer

Production Companies
Screen Australia, Screen NSW, Screen Tasmania, Jessamine Productions & Mezeron Productions present
The Film Company & Wildheart Films production
A Mark Lamprell film
Executive Producers
Al Clark
James M. Vernon
Steve Dunn
Simon Buckingham
Annie Crawford
Robert Albert
Gabrielle Briger
Toni Cody
Joel Perlman
Seph McKenna

CAST
Laura Michelle Kelly
Elspeth Dickens
Ronan Keating
James Dickens
Magda Szubanski
Cassandra Wolfe
Levi Morrison
Zack
Phoenix Morrison
Fred
Hugo Johnstone-Burt
Ralph
Lucy Durack
Cherry
Dustin Clare
Rory
Tamsin Carroll
Deb
Natalie Tran
Helen
Pia Miranda
Sophie
Corinne Grant
Fizz

In Colour
[2.35:1]

Distributor
Metrodome Distribution Ltd

Tasmania, present day. Frustrated housewife Elspeth starts webcasting her song-and-dance numbers while her whale-watching husband James is at sea. She becomes an internet sensation. Whisked to Sydney to front a women's laptop advertising campaign, she snoops on her husband and temporary nanny via webcam. Advertising mogul Cassandra decides to make Elspeth an international star. After a stressful shoot, Elspeth feels torn between the promise of a globetrotting career and returning to her home life with her small sons. James woos her back with whale music. She decides to stay at home, open a small theatre in her barn and keep webcasting.

God Help the Girl

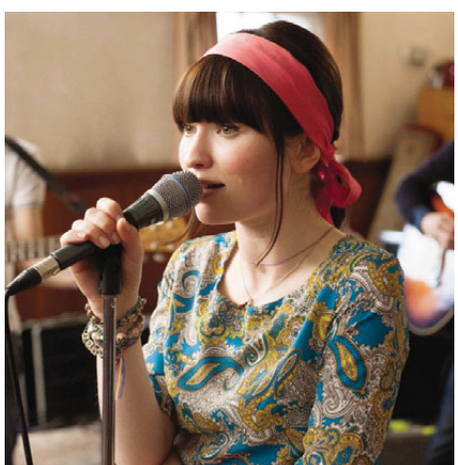
United Kingdom 2012
Director: Stuart Murdoch
Certificate 15 111m 41s

Reviewed by Frances Morgan

God Help the Girl is Stuart Murdoch's first film, but Eve – a young Australian adrift in Glasgow – is not his first damaged heroine. The songs of Belle & Sebastian, the indie group Murdoch founded in 1996, are populated by young women who are bruised, bookish and difficult. His lyrical portraits are often striking and unsentimental: Lisa's catatonic, going blind; suicidal Hilary is into S&M and bible studies; String Bean Jean is so thin "the label on her jeans says seven to eight years old".

It's disappointing, then, that *God Help the Girl*'s stars are such prettified and privileged embodiments of Murdoch's imagination. The film is a musical based on a sort-of concept album released in 2009, so it was never going to be gritty social realism – but the decision to cast glamorous non-Scottish actors in the main roles is a misstep. The young aesthetes of Belle & Sebastian's songs often read as smart, working-class kids, misfits hiding in the library who find salvation in books, movies and records, and whose need to escape into a Godard film or a Zombies song is genuinely felt. With *Gregory's Girl* (1981) an obvious influence, you wonder why Murdoch didn't seek out local actors as Bill Forsyth did, to add some depth to this dreamy confection. As it is, musicians from Glasgow bands such as We Are The Physics and Golden Teacher are relegated to extras, and *God Help the Girl* is voiced by the cut-glass tones of dim schoolgirl Cassie (Hannah Murray) and Olly Alexander's James, in whom all the whimsical but self-aware boys of Belle & Sebastian's songs are compressed into one petulant English bore, complaining about local 'neds' and given to making pronouncements about pop music ("God decides on the classic song") in teacherly tones. Emily Browning plays Eve, and her affectless voice and shifting accent bring to mind another alien in the city, Scarlett Johansson in the recent *Under the Skin*.

Murdoch does at least show his home city's capacity for beauty, unlike Jonathan Glazer's film. *God Help the Girl* takes place over one summer, and its characters drift and caper through the West End's parks and riversides in sequences reminiscent of Richard Lester; these and the many musical set pieces are the most confidently realised parts of the



Song of the north: Emily Browning

film. Here, Browning, Alexander and Murray drop their distanced demeanour to perform Murdoch's wordy songs, whose lyrics hint at much more emotional complexity and humour than anything in his script.

If *God Help the Girl*'s class politics are troubling, the film also reveals an attitude to sexual politics that probably has its roots in empathy with female unhappiness but looks on screen suspiciously like fetishisation of it. Browning's slender body, clothed in a range of indie fantasy outfits from vintage mini-dresses to a tight-fitting football kit, are relentlessly objectified – no wonder Eve wants to disappear, through starvation or music or even, at one point, religion (Murdoch is a Christian, and faith is a recurring theme). The songwriter/director conceived the *God Help the Girl* album to tell stories of young women's lives, sung by young women; what his film reveals, aside from a fondness for kneesocks, is the world of difference in the relationships between songwriter and singer, and director and actor. The women on his album, heard but not seen, are able to put their own stamp on the songs; Eve, for all her musical ability, is there to be looked at rather than to be heard.

Credits and Synopsis

Produced by
Barry Mendel
Written by
Stuart Murdoch
Director of Photography
Giles Nuttgens
Editor
David Arthur
Production Designer
Mark Leese
Songs
Stuart Murdoch
Sound Recordist
Alastair Mason
Costume Designer
Denise Coombes

©Findlay Productions Limited
Production Companies
A Barry Mendel production
Zephyr Films and Singer Films present
In association with Creative Scotland, Hanway Films, British Film Company and Savalas Film
Executive Producers
John Williamson
Chris Curling
Phil Robertson

CAST
Emily Browning
Eve
Olly Alexander
James
Hannah Murray
Cassie
Pierre Boulanger
Anton
Cora Bissett
Miss Browning
Josie Long
Maxine
Sarah Swire
ballerina
Mark Radcliffe
Findlay
Stuart Maconie
Donovan

Dolby Digital
In Colour
[1.85:1]

Distributor
Metrodome Distribution Ltd

Glasgow, the present. Eve, an Australian, is in hospital being treated for an eating disorder and depression. She escapes from hospital to go to a gig, gets drunk and is looked after by James, a musician whose band has just played a disastrous set. As Eve's health improves, she starts writing songs. Leaving hospital, she tracks down James and moves into his flat. She tries to get her demo tape played on the radio by DJ duo Findlay and Donovan. James starts a job teaching music to schoolgirl Cassie. Eve comes to a lesson with him and the three form a band. They advertise for a rhythm section, and the band becomes an eight-piece vehicle for Eve's increasingly sophisticated songs. However, Eve's mental health suffers; she begins a distressing relationship with Anton, a member of another band, and eventually returns to hospital. James visits her; meanwhile he and Cassie book a gig. Eve tells James that she has been offered a place at music college in London but she plays the gig anyway. Eve discovers that Anton gave her tape to Findlay and Donovan, and her songs are being played on the radio. She leaves for London.

God's Pocket

USA 2013
Director: John Slattery
Certificate 15 88m 37s

Reviewed by Philip Kemp

When an actor turns director it's usually good news for his or her cast – chances are they'll be supported, nurtured and encouraged to respond with exceptionally rich and nuanced performances. Which is the case with *God's Pocket*, the first feature directed by John Slattery, best known for playing priapic agency boss Roger Sterling in *Mad Men*. (He cut his directorial teeth on five episodes of the series.) It does no harm, of course, to have a crack cast to nurture, and besides his *Mad Men* co-star Christina Hendricks, Slattery was able to line up an impressive roster: Philip Seymour Hoffman, John Turturro, Eddie Marsan, Richard Jenkins and an authentically scuzzy-looking and disaffected gallery of supporting players.

The film is adapted, by Slattery and co-screenwriter Alex Metcalf, from the 1983 first novel by Pete Dexter, author of *Paris Trout* and *The Paperboy* (both of which he has adapted for the screen) and screenwriter of *Mulholland Falls* (1996). The plot is highly autobiographical. Like Jenkins's character Richard Shellburn, Dexter was a reporter on a Philadelphia daily who specialised in accounts of the hard-scrabble underside of the city; a story he wrote about a killing in the district of Schuylkill (known as 'Devil's Pocket') was so resented by the inhabitants that Dexter (again, like Shellburn) was severely beaten up and hospitalised.

Hoffman, in his penultimate completed picture (it still hurts to watch him, thinking of what now will never be), brings his shambling, crumpled grace to his role as Mickey Scarpato, a man uneasily aware of being outclassed by his wife Jeanie (Hendricks) and constantly reminded that he's not originally from these tribal blocks. The mounting desperation of the scene where he tries to flog off some stolen sides of beef, hampered by the presence in his refrigerator truck of his stepson's corpse ("He was separated from the meat," he later hopelessly assures his wife), sums up the film's pitch-black, often brutal comedy; as does the remark by Sophie, respectable grey-haired florist wife of Mickey's pal Arthur (Turturro), who's just gunned down two hoods come looking for her husband. "Stop, Arthur," she chides him as he furiously kicks one of the dying men, "you're getting blood all over your pants."

Into the hoods: Hoffman, Marsan

Unlike Shellburn, whose patronising prose ("The working men of God's Pocket are simple men...") almost, one can't help feeling, justifies his fate, Slattery never invites us to look down on his characters, boozed-up no-hopers though they mostly are. Justifying backstories aren't laid out for any one of them but there's a sense that even the most casually glimpsed face slumped at the bar, pulling off a small-time heist or putting in hard graft at a dead-end job has a background that might repay digging into – not so much offscreen space as offscreen narrative. Slattery has captured the texture and feel of Dexter's writing to a degree that wouldn't disgrace a far more experienced director.

Credits and Synopsis

Produced by
Sam Bisbee
Jackie Kelman Bisbee
Lance Acord
John Slattery
Philip Seymour Hoffman
Emily Ziff
Screenplay
John Slattery
Based on the novel by Pete Dexter, Alex Metcalf
Director of Photography
Lance Acord
Edited by
Tom McArdle
Production Designer
Roshelle Berliner
Music
Nathan Larson
Costume Designer
Donna Zakowska

©Pocket Pictures, LLC
Production Companies
IFC Films presents a Park Pictures Film in association with Cooper's Town Productions and Shoestring Pictures
Executive Producers
Wendy Neu
Mark Kamine
Michael J. Mailis
Galt Niederhoffer
Tom Valerio
Bill Perry
Frank Brenner
Stefan Sonnenfeld
Ann Porter
Bob Kelman

CAST
Philip Seymour Hoffman
Mickey Scarpato
Richard Jenkins
Richard Shellburn
Christina Hendricks
Jeanie Scarpato
John Turturro
Arthur Capezio, 'Bird'
Eddie Marsan
Smilin' Jack Moran
Peter Gerety
McKenna
Caleb Landry Jones
Leon Hubbard
Domenick Lombardozzi
Sal Cappi
Joyce Van Patten
Aunt Sophie

Dolby Digital
In Colour
[2.35:1]

Distributor
Arrow Films

Philadelphia, 1978. Mickey Scarpato runs a meat business in a crime-ridden district of the city known as 'God's Pocket'. He is married to Jeanie, who has a 22-year-old son, Leon. Mickey hijacks a meat-truck with his friend Arthur, known as 'Bird', and a hood, Sal, to whom Bird owes money. At the construction site where he works, Leon starts menacing Lucien, an elderly black man, with a razor. Lucien hits him with a metal bar, killing him. Foreman Ray and the other workers tell the police that Leon was killed in an accident. Refusing to believe it, Jeanie asks Mickey to discover the truth. She plans a lavish funeral for Leon; undertaker Smilin' Jack Moran says it will cost $5,000.

Local reporter Richard Shellburn hears about Leon's death and comes to interview Jeanie. Mickey asks Bird if Sal can find out what happened to Leon; Sal sends a couple of heavies to the yard but Ray beats them up. The denizens of the local bar organise a collection for Leon's funeral but Mickey loses the money on a horse. Richard takes Jeanie to his country home and has sex with her. Sal and one of his heavies show up at Bird's flower shop carrying guns; Bird's wife shoots them both dead. When Moran learns there's no money for the funeral, he puts Leon's corpse out on the street. Mickey stashes it in his refrigerator truck, but the truck crashes, throwing the body out. After Leon's funeral, Shellburn comes into the bar. Some of the youths haul him into the street and kick him (possibly) to death.

Goltzius and the Pelican Company

The Netherlands/United Kingdom/France/USA 2012
Director: Peter Greenaway
Certificate 18 128m 9s

Reviewed by Jonathan Romney

It was back in the 1980s that Peter Greenaway first proposed the notion of the masque as a possible model for a cinema based on the presentation of tableaux rather than traditional narrative structures. This is an idea whose time has come – as witness the elaborate work of artist Matthew Barney, culminating in the recent opera/film/performance hybrid *River of Fundament*. However, Greenaway's own brand of cinematic *Gesamtkunstwerk* has been out of fashion for some time, a fall from grace that can be dated to 1993 and *The Baby of Mâcon*. The problem has been that his films' visual, linguistic and conceptual density (at times clutter) has tended to overestimate the capacity of even sophisticated viewers to decipher their patterning, a problem that came to a head with the encyclopaedic project *The Tulse Luper Suitcases*.

It is perhaps significant that in his most artistically successful film in some time, Greenaway has returned to the point where things started to go wrong. *Goltzius and the Pelican Company* – in which the late-16th-century Dutch engraver Hendrik Goltzius, seeking funding for a new printing press, stages a series of erotic biblical tableaux for his patron the Margrave of Alsace – could be considered a revision of *The Baby of Mâcon*, but with a coherence missing the first time. Like that film, *Goltzius* is essentially Brechtian, set in a hybrid space that is only ostensibly the representation of a real location: the venue for Goltzius's performances is at once 16th-century court, theatre, film set and what it actually is – a cavernous warehouse/studio space adapted for the staging of a pageant that announces itself as such. As in *The Baby of Mâcon*, the vision is tragic, or apocalyptic: while the film is ostensibly about art, sex and entrepreneurship, its narrative inescapably involves violence and horror, a sacrificial thrust that has sealed the doom of so many Greenaway characters.

Goltzius follows *Nightwatching*, Greenaway's 2007 speculation about Rembrandt, in exploring art-historical themes – something he has also done in recent digital projections on to real paintings at the Venice Biennale and elsewhere. From art history, Greenaway extrapolates contemporary resonance. A key point made by artist-entrepreneur Goltzius, addressing the audience directly, is that "every new visual technology is expensive, and every visual technology sooner or later gets into bed with lechery." What applies to the internet and to CGI was as true in the days of engraving; as Goltzius tells us, sex and the supposedly noble values of western art were always intricately linked. With its inserts showing biblical themes as treated by Van Eyck and others, *Goltzius* reveals how erotic content allowed painters to produce serious work, while biblical and classical themes were also patent excuses to provide sexual frissons: stories such as Susannah and the Elders or Actaeon and Diana, by virtue of their canonical status, offer permissible opportunities for voyeurism.

None of this will be new to art historians, and cinephiles will get the point too; through Goltzius's direct addresses, Greenaway often states the obvious. But what elevates the lecture is the systematic nature of the enterprise – six episodes, six sexual taboos flouted – and the visual clarity, not to say beauty of the execution. *Goltzius* reins in the visual elaboration of some recent Greenaway films: the screen image is less intensely fragmented, the compositions have a greater clarity than we've seen for a while.

Tableaux manners: Ramsey Nasr

Nevertheless, the film is typically captivating in its visual texture: calligraphy projected over Goltzius's face, images manifestly *offered* to us as images, anti-illusionistic texturing that presents backgrounds sometimes as 'treated' photography, sometimes as seemingly engraved. The margrave's palace variously appears as a warehouse space, a theatrical set with a revolving stage and phallic columns and a schematised CGI confection resembling an architect's digital maquette; some images echo Piranesi, others expand the palace space in the manner of David Hockney's photo collages.

The plastic nature of *Goltzius* is more consistently engaging than its overt exploration of diverse themes (among them race, anti-Semitism, religious intolerance, censorship). The problem is perhaps that the explicit commentaries proffered by Goltzius and other characters mean that these themes do not always work themselves out dramatically, at least not in the conventional sense. But at any rate Greenaway's insistence on distanciation works to defuse traditional viewerly identification or involvement with the action. One of his distancing devices appears to be the use of a multinational cast; the heavily accented actors' delivery of English certainly places a barrier between us and the characters, and between us and the dialogue. But Greenaway plays on this element knowingly: lead actor Ramsey Nasr, Holland's poet laureate, exaggerates his Dutch accent so that words take on not merely a surreal but a strangely material quality. Nasr's dandyish master of ceremonies proves an engaging mouthpiece for Greenaway's invective against, among others, those who seek to 'normalise' texts (for "dramaturges" read script editors or perhaps critics) and the way that actors "escape your jurisdiction" (no doubt alluding to their resistance to the non-naturalistic Greenaway performance style).

Whatever eccentricities and infelicities may emerge from the delivery of the words, the cast makes a full-blooded contribution, many stripping off with unabashed courage: there are more genitalia on permanent display, without excessive ceremony, than in *Nymphomaniac*. The sense of an often naked or near-naked ensemble lending their bodies to a ritualistic performance is probably more palpable than in anything since the days of *Hair* and *Oh! Calcutta!* – though Greenaway's Theatre of Cruelty is a universe away from the optimistic hedonism of the 60s.

Credits and Synopsis

Producer
Kees Kasander
Writer
Peter Greenaway
Director of Photography
Reinier Van Brummelen
Editor
Elmer Leupen
Production Design
Ben Zuijdwijk
Composer
Marco Robino
Sound Design
Huibert Boon
Costume Designe
Marrit Van der Burgt
Blanka Budak

©Kasander Film B.V., Portpic Ltd, MP Film Productions, CDP s.a.r.l.

Production Companies
Kasander Film presents in association with Head Gear Films/ Metrol Technology In co-production with Film & Music Entertainment, MP Film Productions, CDP
Executive Producers
Phil Hunt
Compton Ross

CAST
F. Murray Abraham
the Margrave of Alsace
Ramsey Nasr
Hendrik Goltzius
Kate Moran
Adaela
Giulio Berruti
Boethius
Anne Louise Hassing
Susannah
Flavio Parenti
Eduard
Lars Eidinger
Amos Quadfrey
Halina Reijn
Portia
Pippo Del Bono
Samuel
Lisette Malidor
Ebola
Vincent Riotta
Ricardo del Monte
Stefano Scherini
Johannes Cleaver
Francesco De Vito
Rabbi Moab
Nada Abrus
Marie

In Colour
[1.78:1]
Part-subtitled

Distributor
Axiom Films

In 1590, Dutch painter and engraver Hendrik Goltzius visits the Margrave of Alsace to seek finance for a new printing press on which he will publish an Old Testament with erotic illustrations. By way of a taster, Goltzius's theatre troupe will perform six biblical stories, each illustrating a different sexual taboo. As a result, Goltzius's playwright Boethius is jailed for heresy; the margrave's religious advisers, a rabbi and a Calvinist minister, themselves become victims of the escalating violence around the performances. Various erotic intrigues take place among the actors and court members. In the last performance, Boethius's mistress Adaela plays Salome to the margrave's Herod; Boethius is beheaded like John the Baptist. The margrave is driven mad but Goltzius gets his press.

The Grand Seduction

Canada/USA 2013
Director: Don McKellar
Certificate 12A 113m 0s

Reviewed by Jason Anderson

Moviegoers have long demonstrated a fondness for quaint fables celebrating the virtues of small-town living. While some viewers may place greater stock in a counter-tradition that portrays such places as seething cauldrons of lust, hypocrisy and violence – think Samuel Fuller's *The Naked Kiss* (1964), David Lynch's *Blue Velvet* (1986) and Lars von Trier's *Dogville* (2003) – this kind of story retains a hardy appeal. Nearly every nation has its own variation – *Doc Hollywood* (1991) and *Sweet Home Alabama* (2002) in the US, *Welcome to the Sticks* (2008) in France, and *Waking Ned* (1998), *Saving Grace* (2000) and innumerable other slices of whimsy in the UK and Ireland.

Canada has its share too. *The Grand Seduction* is an English-language remake of *La Grande Séduction* (*Seducing Doctor Lewis*), which proved a hit with the country's francophones in 2003. Ken Scott, the film's original writer, was slated to direct the new version until going to Hollywood to take on *The Delivery Man* (2013), itself a remake of his paternity comedy *Starbuck* (2011). For this incarnation, Scott shares a co-writing credit with Michael Dowse, while directing duties are assumed by Don McKellar, the Toronto actor, screenwriter and filmmaker whose recent efforts include the script for Fernando Mereilles's *Blindness* (2008).

Like its predecessor, *The Grand Seduction* largely relies on the tropes of small-town comedies as seen in every other corner of the globe, yet it contains some modest elements of subversion. After all, the most enticing qualities of the struggling fishing community of Tickle Cove have been explicitly concocted to appeal to the man the locals are trying to bamboozle into taking the job of village doctor (a permanent medic being a requirement of the corporation promising to bring a factory – and jobs – to the area). While some gags are patently absurd – for example when the doctor discovers that his favourite Indian dish has been added to the menu of the village's only restaurant – there are a few sly stabs at the clichés prevalent in portrayals of small communities such as this. For example, when the doctor first arrives in Tickle Cove, chief schemer Murray arranges for an accordion player to provide musical accompaniment; a few shots later, he is seen trying to wave the musician off, the required degree of Celtic flavour having apparently been achieved. And while the film contains the obligatory displays of beautifully rugged landscapes, McKellar doesn't disguise the signs of blight in this part of Newfoundland, which has been economically devastated by the collapse of fishing stocks.

Fishing hooks: *The Grand Seduction*

Unfortunately, much of the rest lacks the same savvy and brio despite the efforts of the players. As Murray, Brendan Gleeson successfully maintains his usual bluster while wrapping his brogue around a plausible Newfoundland accent. Having a much better year than he did in 2012 with box-office flops *John Carter* and *Battleship*, Taylor Kitsch acquits himself well as the somewhat dim doctor. Of Kitsch's fellow Canadians in the supporting cast, Gordon Pinsent provides the most pleasure as Simon, Murray's helpmate. An actor who's indelibly associated with the Canadian Maritimes thanks to his performances in films such as *The Rowdyman* (1972), he may be the surest signifier of East Coast authenticity in a movie that never fully decides whether it wants to parody small-town tropes or mine them all over again.

Credits and Synopsis

Produced by
Roger Frappier
Barbara Doran
Written by
Ken Scott
Michael Dowse
Director of Photography
Douglas Koch
Editor
Dominique Fortin
Production Designer
Guy Lalande
Music
Paul-Étienne Côté
Maxime Barzel
François-Pierre Lue
Sound
Jean Camden
Marcel Pothier
Pierre-Jules Audet
Luc Boudrias
Costume Designer
Denis Sperdouklis

©Films Max (TGS) Inc., Morag Loves Seduction Inc.

Production Companies
Les Films Séville, Entertainment One Films, Voltage Pictures present a Max Films, Morag Loves Company production
Produced with interim financing by National Bank of Canada – T.V. and Motion Picture Group
Developed with the assistance of Astral Media, Harold Greenberg Fund
Executive Producers
Jeff Sackman
Joe Iacono
Mark Slone

CAST
Brendan Gleeson
Murray French
Taylor Kitsch
Dr Paul Lewis
Gordon Pinsent
Simon
Liane Balaban
Kathleen
Mark Critch
Henry Tilly
Peter Keleghan
Trip Anderson
Mary Walsh
Vera
Margaret Killingbeck
Ellie
Cathy Jones
Barbara French
Matt Watts
Frank Dalton

Dolby Digital
In Colour
[1.85:1]

Distributor
E1 Films

Newfoundland, the present. Murray longs to reverse the decline of his once thriving fishing village, Tickle Cove. He believes that a petrochemical facility will restore prosperity to the area, but the corporation considering building it insists on the village having its own doctor, something the residents have been trying unsuccessfully to arrange for many years. The former mayor – now a security guard at St John's airport – catches Paul Lewis, a big-city doctor, with cocaine in his baggage. Hoping to keep the matter quiet, Paul agrees to work as Tickle Cove's doctor for a month, prompting an elaborate scheme orchestrated by Murray to convince him that he should take the job on a permanent basis. With the village's telephone operator listening in on Paul's conversations to learn of his interests, Murray and the other locals feign enthusiasm for Paul's favourite sport of cricket; they also tell him that Kathleen, the postmistress, is in love with him. However, Murray becomes troubled by his conscience; he and the other residents reject Paul's offer to stay rather than tell him the truth, but the ruse is revealed by an angry Kathleen after she learns what Murray has told the doctor. Paul agrees to stay. Tickle Cove wins its bid.

A Haunted House 2

Director: Michael Tiddes
Certificate 18 86m 8s

Reviewed by Ashley Clark

Michael Tiddes's evidently hurried sequel to the mystifyingly major US box-office smash-hit comedy *A Haunted House* (2013) is a stylistically inert, knuckle-suckingly unfunny and ceaselessly vulgar retread that's content merely to reassemble its predecessor's desultory constituent parts in near-identikit fashion. To its minimal credit, *A Haunted House 2* doesn't pretend to be a coherent genre spoof: there are token nods to *The Shining* and *The Exorcist* but the most telling indication of its parodic ambition arrives in a jaw-dropping early scene in which narcissistic pervert Malcolm (the unutterably grating Marlon Wayans) engages in a sweaty, vigorous sex session with the possessed children's doll from James Wan's *The Conjuring* (2013). The rest of the running time – a watch-checking 86 minutes – is padded by crassly misogynistic, plainly racist gags and already dated pop-cultural references (*Breaking Bad*, Kim Kardashian etc), which confirm that the filmmakers aren't remotely concerned with permanence. The nadir is a cameo from the libellously named Cedric the Entertainer as a drug-hoovering priest who, shortly before blowing his brains out, opines that Chris Brown's beating of Rihanna was justified. This, truly, is dustbin-ready cinema.

Credits and Synopsis

Producer
Marlon Wayans
Rick Alvarez
Written by
Marlon Wayans
Rick Alvarez
Director of Photography
David Ortkiese
Editor
Tim Markovich
Production Designer
Ermanno Febo-Orsini
Music
Jesse Voccia
Costume Designer
Ariyela Wald-Cohain

Production Companies
Open Road Films and IM Global present in association with Endgame Releasing and Automatik a Baby Way production
Executive Producers
Stuart Ford
Deepak Nayar
Brian Kanaugh-Jones
Lisa Blum
Todd King
Steve Souillante

CAST
Marlon Wayans
Malcolm Johnson
Jaime Pressly
Megan
Essence Atkins
Kisha Davis
Gabriel Iglesias
Miguel
Missi Pyle
Noreen
Ashley Rickards
Becky
Affion Crockett
Ray-Ray
Steele Stebbins
Wyatt
Rick Overton
Professor Wilde
Hayes MacArthur
Ned
Dave Sheridan
Aghoul
Cedric the Entertainer
Father Doug Williams

Dolby Digital
In Colour
[1.85:1]

Distributor
IM Global

LA, present day. Malcolm and his possessed girlfriend Kisha are being driven to a hospital by Malcolm's friend Ray-Ray. Kisha's convulsions prompt Malcolm and Ray-Ray to abandon the car, which crashes, apparently killing Kisha.

Sometime later, Malcolm has moved into a new house with his new girlfriend Megan and their two children, Becky and Wyatt. Malcolm is haunted by images of a malevolent demon. Kisha mysteriously turns up at the house but soon leaves. Becky becomes possessed, and Malcolm calls for help from friends, neighbours and paranormal investigators. Becky is exorcised but the spirit enters Malcolm. Later, Ray-Ray visits the house to find Megan and Becky dead and Wyatt missing. Malcolm is dazed. A spirit, possibly Kisha's, briefly appears.

Heaven Is for Real

USA 2014
Director: Randall Wallace
Certificate PG 99m 21s

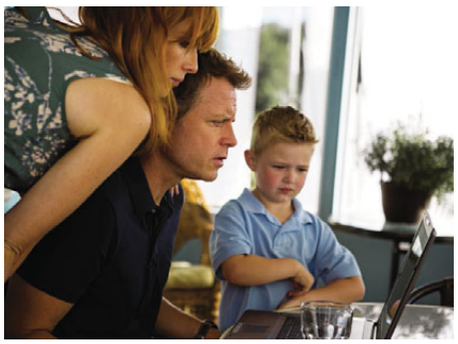
Reviewed by Derek O'Connor

Based on actual events that occurred in 2003, *Heaven Is for Real* details Nebraskan pastor Todd Burpo's rocky road to acceptance after his young son apparently experiences religious ecstasy – via a trip to the afterlife – on the operating table.

The rural Nebraska witnessed in writer-director Randall Wallace's adaptation of Burpo's bestselling memoir of (and I quote) "A Little Boy's Astounding Story Of His Trip To Heaven And Back" bears little resemblance to the terrain covered in Alexander Payne's critically revered *Nebraska* (2013), despite both movies offering contemporary portraits of hard times in flyover country. Whereas Payne captured small-town Nebraskan living in starkest black-and-white, here veteran Aussie cinematographer Dean Semler (whose eclectic filmography takes in everything from *Mad Max 2* and *Dances with Wolves* to this summer's CGI-drenched *Maleficent*) paints it as a veritable heaven on earth, with perfect blue skies offsetting a seemingly endless cornfield of dreams. Possibly what happens when you shoot your film in Winnepeg instead. Wallace burnishes his cast to boot with a pair of skilled character actors familiar from Payne's oeuvre, namely Thomas Hayden Church and the incomparable Margo Martindale, both bringing a much needed earthy flavour to otherwise dramatically anaemic fare.

In so far as narrative tension goes, goodly renaissance man Burpo (Greg Kinnear) struggles to make ends meet while juggling gigs as preacher, garage-door repairman, high-school wrestling coach and part-time fireman, pausing only to banter suggestively with his flame-haired choir-teacher wife (Kelly Reilly) and bond with his spunky kids – all the while dealing with a series of medical misfortunes (some, like a nasty case of kidney stones, played for laughs) that suggest the Almighty has it in for the poor pastor. That the Burpo clan's dire financial circumstances – stoked further by his son's crippling medical bills – are apparently forgotten come our uplifting denouement suggests that God is indeed great, especially when it comes to debt forgiveness.

What Hollywood likes to refer to as 'faith-based' cinema – movies aimed primarily at devout Christian audiences – has proved a profitable niche genre in American cinema,



Pearly riser: *Heaven Is for Real*

with occasional breakout successes such as Tyler Perry's seemingly endless Madea series and Mel Gibson's Biblical torture-porn epic *The Passion of the Christ* (2004). This year, however, has already proven to be something of a watershed, with a number of box-office hits (*Heaven Is for Real* chief among them) confirming a fervent audience for devotional fare. Whereas Darren Aronofsky's affably bonkers *Noah* afforded an idiosyncratic filmmaker the opportunity to examine Bible lore in a challenging fashion, here Wallace is happy to play directly to the home crowd, with all potential naysayers (notably a cynical psychologist character) towing the sacred line by the time we get to the inspiring finale. Wallace, who penned the script for Gibson's *Braveheart* (1995), is an achingly sincere filmmaker: the great sin his movie commits, however, is denying his audience the slightest opportunity to make up its own mind.

His secret weapon is Kinnear, a reliable cinematic everyman who has never quite graduated to the A-list, and whose natural charisma (underwritten with a flawed, mildly exasperated quality) makes him a natural for the role of a holy man struggling to embrace the miraculous. Kinnear's past as a chat-show host helps when it comes to delivering Burpo's sermons with a winning charm; he also enjoys a tangible chemistry with co-star Reilly, in her second movie this year exploring issues of faith after John Michael McDonagh's pitch-black ecumenical comedy-thriller *Calvary*. Now there's a double bill.

Credits and Synopsis

Produced by
Joe Roth
T.D. Jakes
Screenplay
Randall Wallace
Christopher Parker
Based on the book by Todd Burpo with Lynn Vincent
Director of Photography
Dean Semler
Film Editor
John Wright
Production Designer
Arv Greywal
Music
Nick Glennie-Smith
Production Mixer
Leon Johnson
Costume Designer
Michael T. Boyd

©Columbia Pictures

Industries, Inc.
Production Companies
TriStar Pictures
Presents a Roth Films/T.D. Jakes production
A Randall Wallace film
Produced with the assistance of the Government of Manitoba – Manitoba Film & Video Production Tax Credit
Executive Producers
Sue Baden-Powell
Sam Mercer
Derrick Williams

CAST
Greg Kinnear
Todd Burpo
Kelly Reilly
Sonja Burpo
Margo Martindale
Nancy Rawling
Jacob Vargas
Michael
Connor Corum
Colton Burpo
Thomas Haden Church
Jay Wilkins

Dolby Digital/ Datasat/SDDS
In Colour
Prints by
DeLuxe
[2.35:1]

Distributor
Sony Pictures Releasing

Nebraska, present day. Pastor Todd Burpo's four-year-old son Colton tells his father of a visit to heaven during a recent life-saving operation, where he encountered Christ riding on a rainbow-coloured horse. The child proceeds to recount details of his family's activities during the operation – activities he could not have been privvy to – as well as heavenly enounters with his long-deceased great-grandfather and miscarried sister, now a young girl in the afterlife.

Todd struggles to comprehend his son's revelations, and an agnostic university psychologist dismisses them as a hallucinatory chemical reaction to a near-death experience. Todd's church expresses discomfort after a local newspaper publishes an interview with Colton. Todd chooses to embrace his son's experiences and share his story with his churchgoers.

In an epilogue, Todd learns of a young Lithuanian girl who had a near-death experience similar to his son's: the girl's paintings show Christ just as Colton saw him during his visit to heaven.

Humshakals

Director: Sajid Khan
Certificate 12A 159m 17s

Reviewed by Naman Ramachandran

Sajid Khan has made a career out of inept London-set comedies such as *Housefull* (2010) and its sequel. Their success perhaps prompted him to make *Humshakals*, a truly woeful film about three sets of doppelgangers attempting to wrest control of a multimillion-pound business. The only inspired moments arrive when patients at a mental asylum are forced to watch Khan's own 2013 flop *Himmatwala* as a form of torture, and later his sister Farah Khan's dire *Tees Maar Khan* (2010). The farcical climax, which unfolds at a meeting at the House of Commons presided over by a Hindi-spouting Prince Charles, could have ascended to Marx Brothers-style genius in the hands of a good filmmaker. Khan is not that. Instead, we get a character trying to rape his doppelganger, who's in drag.

Unfortunately, these films will continue to be made, because despite the worst critical mauling dished out to an Indian film in recent years, *Humshakals* is a hit at the Indian box office.

Treble in paradise: *Humshakals*

Credits and Synopsis

Producer
Vashu Bhagnani
Written by
Sajid Khan
Director of Photography
Ravi Yadav
Editors
Rameshwar S. Bhagat
Bunty Nagi
Production Designer
David Bryan
Music
Himesh Reshammiya
Sound
Leslie Fernandes
Costume Designers
Aastha Sharma
Kunal Rawal
Mohit Rai
Sonia Tommy

Production Companies
Fox Star Studios presents a Pooja Entertainment & Films Ltd production
A Vashu Bhagnani production
A Sajid Khan film

CAST
Saif Ali Khan
Ashok Singhania
Riteish Deshmukh
Kumar
Ram Kapoor
Mamaji/Johnny/ Rajvinder
Tamannaah Bhatia
Shanaya
Bipasha Basu
Mishti
Esha Gupta
Dr Shivani Gupta
Satish Shah
Y.M. Raj
Darshan Jariwala
ward boy
Chunkey Pandey
Bijlani
Nawab Shah
Dr Khan

In Colour
[2.35:1]
Subtitles

Distributor
20th Century Fox International (UK)

London, the present. Billionaire Singhania is in a coma. His evil relative Mamaji wants to wrest control of Singhania's business from his son Ashok, who is an aspiring stand-up comic, and his associate Kumar. Mamaji mixes drugs in Ashok and Kumar's water at a board meeting, gets them committed to a mental institution and replaces them with their doppelgangers, also named Ashok and Kumar, who are escapees from the asylum. The sane Ashok and Kumar discover that Mamaji has a doppelganger at the asylum, and break out along with him to foil Mamaji's plans. More doppelgangers arrive on the scene to add to the confusion. Matters are resolved when Singhania regains consciousness and identifies the real Ashok and Kumar. Mamaji is jailed.

The Internet's Own Boy

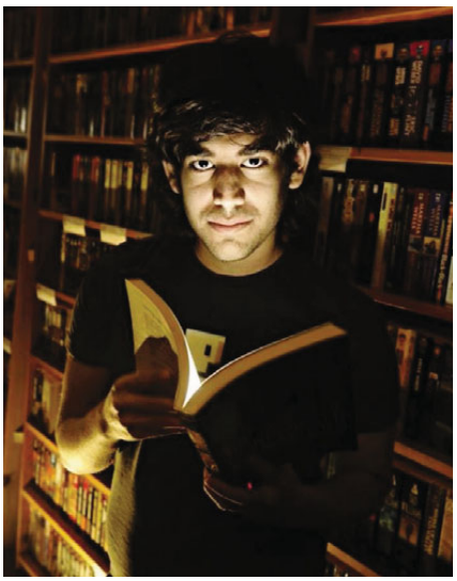
Director: Brian Knappenberger

Reviewed by Nick Pinkerton

If you've seen enough politically invested doctivist documentaries, you can see it coming a mile away: the requisite 'our resolve has not faltered' montage at the end, intended as a stirring on-the-way-out assurance to the inevitably ideologically aligned audience that yes, the struggle will continue. In this spirit, I herein hope to prove that the flame is still burning in the noble battle against the info-dump doc.

In the case of *The Internet's Own Boy*, the montage comes after the death of Aaron Swartz, the 26-year-old internet millionaire-turned-hacktivist, who committed suicide in January 2013, his decision to do so almost certainly heavily influenced by the legal axe hanging over him. An advocate of the Open Access movement, whose precepts hold that information in academic journals should be available for free to the public, Swartz was caught downloading the complete library of one of the largest of the pay websites handling academic journal material; he was zealously prosecuted by the US government and threatened with a potentially life-ruining jail sentence.

Swartz comes to us in *The Internet's Own Boy* through home videos, public appearances on stage and television and the testimony of those who knew him: his parents, brothers, girlfriends and a host of older high-profile internet figures who admired this principled, swashbuckling young prodigy, including worldwide web inventor Tim Berners-Lee and copyright law activist Lawrence Lessig. Swartz appears as a preternaturally brilliant and well-spoken young man in the archival footage, which is mixed in with a tremendous number of *Wired* photo-shoot images and selfies, which offer bountiful opportunity to gaze into Swartz's magnetic brown eyes.



Sweet smell of access: Aaron Swartz

'Remember Aaron Swartz!' became a rallying slogan after his death, and *The Internet's Own Boy*, lousy with these pin-up inserts, is the apotheosis of the movement to cast him as an internet martyr who died for our sins. (The film's title comes from one of the interviewees: "He was the internet's own boy, and the old world killed him.") Director Brian Knappenberger, whose previous credits include *We Are Legion: The Story of the Hacktivists* (2012), has all the moves down for this sort of thing, and hits his marks with aplomb if not, particularly, panache. If you are not familiar with Swartz's story and infotainment is your preferred method to fan your outrage, then Knappenberger's movie will give you the basics – though don't expect to find a single devil's advocate, as almost all the information has been curated to buttress the film's central premise that, as Swartz's father Robert says, Aaron "was killed by the government". (Knappenberger periodically offers asides assuring us that the villains of his piece refused to appear on camera – one would think that part of the documentarian's job would be convincing at least one or two of them to do so.)

Though there are a few suspect claims – was the groundswell of protest in 2011 really a period of "unprecedented activism"? Does 1848 count? – Knappenberger has cleared the rights on all the necessary archival material, and hey, that ain't easy. There is nothing whatsoever about *The Internet's Own Boy* that demands it be viewed with an audience in a cinema as opposed to supine with a laptop perched on your belly, and nothing about the subject matter suggests that anyone interested will watch it any other way. The film is available for free download at non-profit digital library the Internet Archive, which is apt, if not exactly an incentive.

Credits and Synopsis

Written by
Brian Knappenberger
Cinematography
Lincoln Else
Scott Sinkler
Edited by
Bryan Storkel
Michelle Witten
Andy Roberston
Jason Decker
Brian Knappenberger
Music
John Dragonetti
Audio
Marianna LaFollette
Nathan Tisdale

(cc) [i.e.'creative commons'] BY-NC-SA
Production Companies
Filmbuff and Participant Media present in association with Luminant Media and Unjustus films
Executive Producers
Charles Annenberg Weingarten
Brian Knappenberger
Film Extracts
The Wizard of Oz (1939)
WarGames (1983)
Steal This Film II (2007)
War for the Web (to be released 2014)

In Colour [1.78:1]

Distributor
Kaleidoscope Entertainment

In 2006, computer prodigy Aaron Swartz becomes a millionaire before his 20th birthday by selling Reddit, the website he co-founded, to Condé Nast Publications. Rather than continue working within a corporate environment, Swartz becomes engaged in internet activism and progressive politics, particularly Open Access, the movement to make information such as court documents free and readily available to the public. In 2010-11, Swartz is caught downloading the complete holdings of JSTOR, a website that charges for access to academic journals, on a laptop hidden in a wiring closet at the campus of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. Federal prosecutors put together a case against Swartz, who faces disproportionately harsh felony charges intended to make an example of him. He continues with his activism, and is an instrumental figure in eroding congressional support for the Stop Online Piracy Act (SOPA) bill. Further charges are added to the federal case against Swartz. Increasingly despondent, he commits suicide in January 2013. In death he becomes a rallying figure for other activists.

The Keeper of Lost Causes

Director: Mikkel Nørgaard
Certificate 15 96m 31s

Reviewed by Kate Stables

Based on an international bestseller by Jussi Adler-Olsen and number one at the Danish box office for seven weeks, *The Keeper of Lost Causes* is a Nordic noir whose credentials would appear at first glance to be impeccable. But this solid, pedestrian crime thriller chooses to cherry-pick its ingredients with an eye to what's already proven rather than what might be thought-provoking or challenging.

Director Mikkel Nørgaard (*Klown*, TV's *Borgen*) sticks strictly to a by-the-numbers recipe for this tale of a disgraced cop, relegated to cold-case repository Department Q and obsessed with the supposed suicide of junior politician Merete. Without the space or the inclination to explore the dark underbelly of Danish institutions (that's what long-form TV series like *The Killing* are for), this is a straightforward police procedural, though it still manages to corral more cop-show tropes from its original source than you'd usually find in a big-screen adaptation: a moody maverick detective, burdened with guilt after a bungled arrest that leaves his partner paralysed; a creaking odd-couple partnership with cheerful Syrian assistant Assad; the inevitable police and political obstructions, culminating in suspension for insubordination. This film is like a supermarket sweep of tec tropes.

As Carl Mørck, the hard-drinking, anti-depressant-popping hero, a curiously stiff Nikolaj Lie Kaas can't inject any interest, settling instead for medium scowling, leavened by mordant stares. There's no spark between him and Fares Fares's equally dogged and two-dimensional Assad, making their photo-riffling, background-checking legwork feel rote. Only Sonja Richter, watchably filled with dread and defiance as long-term kidnap victim Merete, gives a sense of jeopardy to the proceedings. And as her mute, irreparably traumatised brother, Mikkel Boe Følsgaard (just as good as he was in *A Royal Affair*) transmits panic with the smallest movement, giving the film a welcome jolt.

Burdened with TV and crime-novel clichés, this admittedly lean movie lacks the twisty storytelling advantages that longer forms enjoy. A single narrative feint is briskly despatched; unlike that other captive-victim police procedural *Prisoners* (2013), this has no tangy red-herring suspects to stoke the plot. Instead, screenwriter Nikolaj Arcel runs a pair of parallel narratives, unfolding Merete's plight alongside Carl's investigation. These are the film's most tense and successful sections – DP Eric Kress gives Merete's pressure-chamber prison its own ghastly green hue, contrasting nicely with the steely blue-grey palette nowadays obligatory for Scandinavian sleuthing.

Arcel, who also wrote the script for *The Girl with the Dragon Tattoo* (2009), manages to make Merete's ordeal harrowing (there's a memorable do-your-own-dentistry sequence with pliers) without descending into that other overworked Nordic noir theme, misogyny examined through the torture of female victims. He and Nørgaard also weave in an arresting clutch of memories of a childhood car accident, which have the supra-real feel of thoughts rubbed smooth by repetition, like pebbles. Flashes such as these,

Snaps decision: Nikolaj Lie Kaas, Fares Fares

hinting at what the film could have been, make the workmanlike dialogue and clumsy characterisation doubly irritating. It's possible surely, even now that sophisticated local long-form TV serials have upped the ante for detective stories, to produce an invigorating Nordic big-screen police procedural. *Jar City* (2006) gave a gruff Icelandic spin to the genre. Let us hope that the next outing of the Department Q franchise, *Fasandraeberne* (*The Absent One*), due out this autumn, can find something grittier and less generic in the cold-case files.

Credits and Synopsis

Producers
Louise Vesth
Peter Aalbæk Jensen
Written by
Nikolaj Arcel
Based on the book by Jussi Adler-Olsen
Director of Photography
Eric Kress
Editor
Morten Egholm
Martin Schade
Production Designer
Rasmus Thjellesen
Music
Patrick Andren
Uno Helmersson
Johan Soderqvist
Sound Editor
Hans Møller
Costume Designer
Stine Thaning

Production Company
Zentropa Entertainments20, Zentropa Entertainments Berlin, Zentropa International Sweden, Film i vast
Executive Producer
Marie Gade

CAST
Nikolaj Lie Kaas
Inspector Carl Mørck
Fares Fares
Assad
Sonja Richter
Merete
Mikkel Boe Følsgaard
Uffe
Søren Pilmark
Jacobson
Troels Lyby
Hardy
Morten Kirkskov
Lars Bjørn
Magnus Millang
Daniel Hale

In Colour
[2.35:1]
Subtitles

Distributor
Picturehouse Entertainment

Danish theatrical title
Kvinden i buret

Copenhagen, present day. After a homicide case in which his partner is paralysed, detective Carl Mørck is assigned to a cold-case unit, Dept Q, with assistant Assad. Instead, they investigate the supposed suicide of junior politician Merete. Flashbacks show Merete's point of view: snatched from a ferry, she's been held captive in a pressure chamber for several years. After investigating Merete's politician ex-lover, Carl is disciplined. When Merete's mute brother Uffe becomes agitated by a photograph, it leads Dept Q to Sweden. They discover that sailor Lars impersonated his friend Daniel to meet Merete, then drowned him. Carl and Assad are suspended. Meanwhile, Merete remains defiant towards her unseen captor. Assad discovers that Merete and Lars were both involved in a childhood car accident, which killed Lars's father. At Lars's mother's farmhouse, they are told that Lars is at sea. In fact Lars is in an outhouse, letting all the air out of Merete's chamber. Carl and Assad are alerted by the sound of the generator. Lars stabs Assad. Carl escapes briefly, reinstating Merete's air supply. Carl is attacked by Lars but is saved by a wounded Assad. Merete is revived in hospital. Offered reinstatement to the homicide department, Carl chooses instead to continue working Dept Q cold cases with Assad.

Moebius

South Korea 2013
Director: Kim Ki-duk

The flesh is bleak: Cho Jae-hyun

Reviewed by Trevor Johnston

Actions speak louder than words in this controversial drama from South Korean maverick Kim Ki-duk, largely because dialogue has been replaced by a series of grunts and guttural cries, but also because the action itself has a feral, brutal quality cutting through social niceties to expose fundamental human impulses of rage and desire. Against a backdrop of bland suburbia, a wife reacts ferociously to her husband's affair by attempting to emasculate him with a very large knife, but when he evades her assault she switches her attention to the teenage son she's just caught masturbating. A quick swish, the offending parts are removed, and for extra effect she eats them in front of both husband and son. It's a sort of domestic meltdown, where the father's sexual needs, no longer contained by marriage, prompt a catastrophic chain reaction. As the story continues, both generations of men, the shop-owning mistress and the errant matriarch play out a string of physical encounters running the gamut from rape to incest, helpfully facilitated by the latest surgical techniques and some inventively unconventional lovemaking.

Outrageous? Ostensibly, yes, especially coming from a filmmaker who's used cheap shock value in the past (the fish cruelty in 2000's *The Isle*, for instance), yet there's evidently more going on here than a mere attempt to

Credits and Synopsis

Producer
Kim Soon-mo
Written by
Kim Ki-duk
Director of Photography
Kim Ki-duk
Editor
Kim Ki-duk
Production Designer
Hong Zi
Music
Park In-young
Sound Design
Lee Seung-yeop
Costume Designer
Lee Jin-sook

©Kim Ki-duk Film
Production Company
A Kim Ki-duk Film production
Executive Producers
Kim Ki-duk
Kim Woo-taek

CAST
Cho Jae-hyun
Seo Young-ju
Lee Eun-woo

In Colour
[1.85:1]
Subtitles

Distributor
Terracotta Distribution

South Korean theatrical title
Moebiuseu

Suburban South Korea, present day. Mother, angry that Father is having an affair, picks up a knife kept at home under a Buddha statue. Failing to emasculate her husband, she goes for teenage Son instead, then eats the detached genitals. Afterwards, she wanders the streets, encountering a stranger praying to a Buddha in a shop window. A contrite Father scorns his shop-owner Mistress. The castrated Son is bullied at school. Mistress takes pity on the lad, but when she is raped by a gang of roughs, he's forced to play along and take his turn. Later, showing newfound aggression, he attacks Father and the gang leader at the police station, and is jailed for rape. In the meantime, Father discovers online that it's possible to achieve orgasm without a penis, by rubbing the skin raw with rocks, and so he gives Son a stone when he's released from jail. The latter begins an affair with Mistress, who stimulates him sexually with a kitchen knife. Father learns that penis transplants are now medically possible, and passes his organ to Son. Now unable to achieve an erection with Mistress, Son is however aroused by the returned Mother, who torments Father by making overtures towards her boy. Father kills Mother, and Son then shoots off his own penis. Later he prays to a shop-window Buddha, where he meets Mother.

épater la bourgeoisie – notwithstanding the two-and-a-half minutes of cuts the South Korean censors required before passing the title for domestic release. No, by doing away with the dialogue, never naming the characters and having the same actress play both the mother and the mistress, Kim steers away from the gritty realist approach he took in *Pietà* (2012), his previous assault on the social and economic mores of his native land, and instead foregrounds these events as an adult fable. His splendidly committed trio of actors may be doing all they can to bring an emotional authenticity to the individual moment but their efforts clearly unfold in an imaginative space where all bets are off and Kim can happily pick apart the way we're accustomed to think of sexuality and social cohesion, investigating the tensions between the needs of the body and those of the spirit. (There's a key role for a statue of Buddha's head, under which the crucial knife is kept.) This overall design in some ways brings to mind the Pasolini of *Theorem* (1968) and *Pigsty* (1969), but the sheer sinewy knockabout involved – which ramps up with the discovery that orgasm without genitalia is indeed achievable with a little flesh-strafing, stone-rubbing autoerotic stimulation! – is also, surprisingly, very amusing indeed. At times the cartoonish carnage achieves *Tom and Jerry* levels of impishly malign intensity, though a more apposite reference point might be something like Jan Svankmajer's iconic 1983 short *Dimensions of Dialogue*, since both there and here the escalating battle of wills is delivered with zero sentimentality and an underlying metaphorical purpose, asking the audience to ponder the meaning behind the mayhem.

That's quite a trick to pull off, and for a filmmaker often criticised for a certain lack of discipline, Kim proves a canny navigator here, giving us just enough gruesome detail for the film to retain its edge but never getting too off-putting in the process. Moreover, Kim's storytelling remains true to itself, never wimping out as it ventures towards a truly disarming finale, whose nifty narrative circularity not only makes good on the otherwise enigmatic-seeming title but also returns to the Buddha-head reference to suggest a place of serenity in celibacy. If the repeated question in *Pietà* was "what is money?", in this instance it's "what is sex?" or even "what is a penis?", since for all the seductive wiles shown by the controlling impulses of Lee Eun-woo's mother and mistress, the men's unruly urges are very much seen as the root of all the destructive consequences. Kim flags up the notion of Zen-like abstinence as a calming influence, which may not necessarily be a helpful solution for Korea's future population growth but does seem preferable to the fabulist madness overwhelming these archetypal characters. For Kim, too, the concentration and control involved in telling a story purely through visuals, and holding steady within certain tonal parameters, has proved a beneficial undertaking. The demands here are obviously quite different from the structural rigour involved in the narrative layout of *Spring, Summer, Autumn, Winter... and Spring* (2003), yet in both cases facing up to creative restriction has corralled this sometimes obstreperous auteur into his very best work.

Mrs. Brown's Boys D'Movie

Ireland/United Kingdom 2014
Director: Ben Kellett
Certificate 15 94m 11s

Reviewed by Anna Smith

Author Brendan O'Carroll's Agnes Browne first appeared on film in 1999, in the sentimental drama of the same name starring Anjelica Huston. Since then, Agnes has lost the 'e' in Brown and become a sitcom sensation played by O'Carroll himself. Like the show, the movie of *Mrs Brown's Boys* relies heavily on cross-dressing comedy and working-class Irish stereotypes, but it struggles to stretch its story to fit a feature-length format.

There's little tension as Brown and her adult children rumble around Dublin trying to find a tax receipt that could save her market stall, which is threatened by the archetypal greedy developers. Comedy is broad and dramatic impact limited. Only one subplot carries any emotional weight: the revelation that as a young widow Mrs Brown briefly put her children into care. As with the TV series, O'Carroll periodically breaks the fourth wall by mugging to camera and showing actors giggling inappropriately, highlighting the artifice of an inauthentic story.

When considering the move to the big screen, *Mrs Brown's Boys* director Ben Kellett would have done well to heed this film's message: don't let the money men develop a small, well-loved institution.

Credits and Synopsis

Produced by
Stephen McCrum
Screenplay
Brendan O'Carroll
Director of Photography
Martin Hawkins
Editor
Mark Lawrence
Production Designer
Simon Rogers
Original Score and Music Composed by
Andy O'Callaghan
Production Sound Mixer
Bob Newton
Costume Designer
Leah Archer

©BocFlix Ltd and British Broadcasting Corporation
Production Companies
Universal Pictures and BBC Films present in association with Penalty Kick Films, That's Nice Films and Finglas Films a BocFlix production
A filum by Ben Kellett
Executive Producers
Brendan O'Carroll
Christine Langan
Mark Freeland
Danny O'Carroll
Amanda Woods
Paddy Houlihan
Jennifer Gibney
Rory Cowan
Fiona O'Carroll
Martin Delany
Conor Harrington
Mark Brown
Gary Hollywood
Dino Doyle
Robert Bathurst
Maydo Archer
Dermot Crowley
P.R. Irwin
Simon Delaney
Tom Crews

Dolby Digital
In Colour
[1.85:1]

Distributor
Universal Pictures International UK & Eire

CAST

Brendan O'Carroll
Mrs Agnes Brown/ Mr Wang
Jennifer Gibney
Cathy Brown
Rory Cowan
Rory Brown
Danny O'Carroll
Buster Brady
Amanda Woods
Betty Brown
Fiona O'Carroll
Maria Brown
Paddy Houlihan
Dermot Brown
Eilish O'Carroll
Winnie McGoogan
Dermot O'Neill
Grandad
Martin Delany
Trevor Brown
Pat 'Pepsi' Shields

Dublin, the present. Agnes Brown receives a tax demand for her fruit and vegetable stall on Moore Street Market, which her grandmother failed to pay. With interest, it is nearly €4 million. Local P.R. Irwin secretly plots to close Moore Street Market. A company he has interests in offers to buy the stall and waive the debt, but Mrs Brown stands firm. Hearing that a local woman witnessed her grandmother paying the tax bill, Mrs Brown takes her to sign an affidavit; however, the woman is killed in traffic. Mrs Brown's sons and friends break into the national records office to find the tax receipt. They find the Braille receipt and set off for court, where the case is being tried. The case is dismissed.

Mystery Road

Director: Ivan Sen

Reviewed by Philip Kemp

For a murder mystery to leave the odd loose end dangling is nothing so reprehensible – witness the famous example of 'who killed the chauffeur?' in Howard Hawks's *The Big Sleep* (1946), which neither screenwriters William Faulkner and Leigh Brackett nor Raymond Chandler, author of the original novel, could answer. But when a film leaves so many loose ends drifting in the wind that the whole plot starts to unravel like an ill-knitted sweater, there's more of a problem.

Like the deracinated Native American played by Lou Diamond Phillips in *Sioux City* (1994), Aussie police detective Jay Swan (Aaron Pedersen) finds himself suspended between his native culture and white society, mistrusted by both sides. As an Aboriginal, he's patronised and marginalised by his white colleagues; as a cop, he's regarded with suspicion by his fellow Aboriginals. Assigned the case of a young Aboriginal girl found murdered in a highway drain, he's specifically told by his chief (Tony Barry, beaming with faux-matey contempt) that he can't expect any support for what's evidently considered a low-priority case. There's a hint, in the stetson Jay habitually affects, that his is the role of the lone gunman, charged with cleaning up a corrupt community.

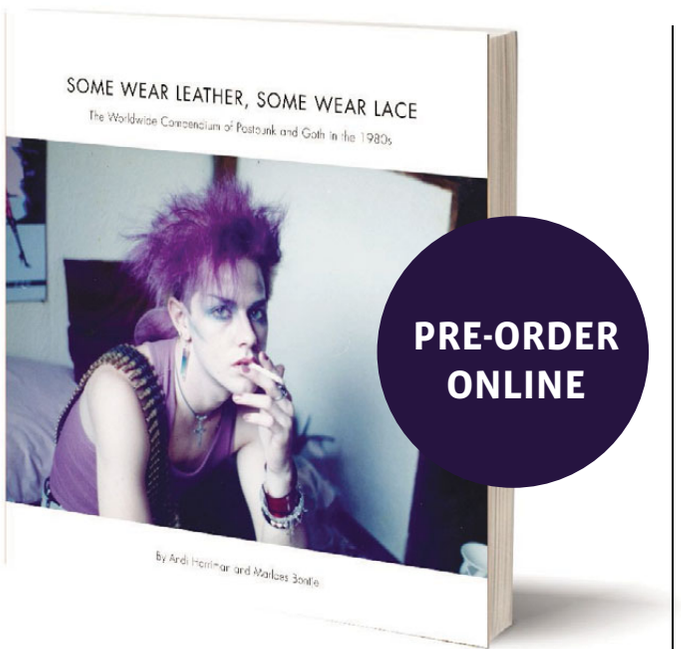
Mystery Road writer-director Ivan Sen has noted, "is full of my childhood and adulthood experiences". Himself of mixed race, Aboriginal on his mother's side, brought up in a similar small outback town, he brings (as in his previous films, *Beneath Clouds* and *Toomelah*) an aching sense of fractured cultural identity, and of the bigotry festering beneath his country's easygoing 'good on yer' image. The portrayal of this conflicted society, where racism informs every exchange (though it is rarely openly expressed) and the threat of violence hangs in the air like a dust cloud, creates a potent mood of paranoia. Sen's evocative cinematography (he acts as his own DP and editor) finds a stark beauty in the unforgiving outback landscape. It's a film of intense, deeply felt texture.

But ah, that straggle of a plot, one damned thing after another. Characters slip in and out, leaving little trace, and various storylines – talk of a race of wild superdogs, the recent killing of a young white cop (possibly

No way outback: Aaron Pedersen

Intellect books

publishers of original thinking | www.intellectbooks.com



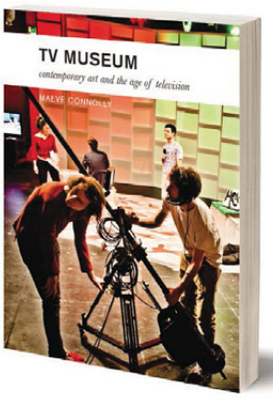
SOME WEAR LEATHER, SOME WEAR LACE

A Worldwide Compendium of Postpunk and Goth in the 1980s

By Andi Harriman and Marloes Bontje

ISBN 9781783203529 | September
Paperback | Price £24.5, $35

'Terrific photographs, a wide range of interviews, and an international perspective on the goth phenomenon make this an original contribution to the field of subcultural studies'
-Valerie Steele



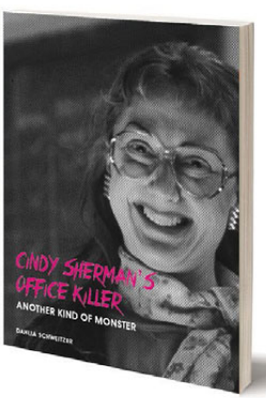
TV MUSEUM

Contemporary Art and the Age of Television

By Maeve Connolly

ISBN 9781783201815
Paperback | Price £30, $43

'Scholarship on the art world's encounter with television takes a massive step forward with the publication of TV Museum. In this original and intelligent book, Maeve Connolly lays out a comprehensive anatomy of the shape this encounter has taken in recent decades, focusing not only on artists but also on curators, cultural agencies, and community organizations.'
- Anna McCarthy



CINDY SHERMAN'S OFFICE KILLER

Another Kind of Monster

By Dahlia Schweitzer

ISBN 9781841507071
Paperback | Price £16, $23

'The first book on this neglected piece of an esteemed artist's oeuvre, Cindy Sherman's Office Killer rescues the film from critical oblivion and situates it next to the artist's other iconic works.'
- Will Brooker

Intellect is an independent academic publisher of books and journals, to view our catalogue or order our titles visit www.intellectbooks.com or E-mail: marketing@intellectbooks.com. Intellect, The Mill, Parnall Road, Fishponds, Bristol, UK, BS16 3JG. Telephone: +44 (0) 117 9589910.

by a colleague) – are introduced only to be left hanging. And the whole affair is wound up with a mass shootout on a rocky bluff – impressively choreographed but still running headlong into the cliché that the hero, though vastly outnumbered, walks away unscathed with all his opponents dead.

In the lead, Pedersen gives a stoic performance, emotions conveyed through a twitch of the eyes or the set of his jaw. As Jay's ambiguous colleague Johnno, his 'good guy or bad guy?' status an enigma until the denouement, Hugo Weaving exudes sinister affability in his best style. They, and a supporting roster of some of Australia's finest – Jack Thompson, Ryan Kwanten, Bruce Spence – deserved a better-engineered vehicle.

Credits and Synopsis

Producer
David Jowsey
Written by
Ivan Sen
Director of Photography
Ivan Sen
Editor
Ivan Sen
Production Designer
Matt Putland
Composer
Ivan Sen
Costume Designer
Vanessa Loh

Production Companies
Screen Australia and Australian Broadcasting Corporation in association with Screen Queensland, Arclight Films and Mystery Road Films present
Executive Producers
Gary Hamilton
Michael Wren

CAST
Aaron Pedersen
Jay Swan
Hugo Weaving
Johnno
Jack Thompson
Mr Murray
Ryan Kwanten
Pete
Tony Barry
sergeant
Tasma Walton
Mary
Robert Mammone
Constable Roberts
David Field
Sam Bailey
Damian Walshe-Howling
Wayne
Jack Charles
old boy
Samara Weaving
Peggy
Daniel Roberts
Macca
Bruce Spence
Jim
Tricia Whitton
Crystal
Roy Billing
Robbo

In Colour [2.35:1]

Distributor
Axiom Films

Outback Queensland, the present. Jay Swan, an Aboriginal police officer newly promoted to detective, returns to his native town of Winton. He's assigned to the case of murdered Aboriginal teenager Julie Mason, whose body has been found in a drain beneath the highway. His chief tells him not to expect any backup. Jay learns that Julie was hooked on drugs and used to have sex with truck drivers for money. He discovers that she was texting his teenage daughter Crystal. He visits Crystal and his estranged wife Mary but makes little headway with either of them.

The behaviour of Jay's colleagues Johnno and Robbo arouses his suspicions; Johnno warns him off. Visiting a farm near the crime scene, Jay interviews the owner, Sam Bailey, and glimpses his son Pete, a frequent guest at the motel where Julie met clients. Another Aboriginal teenager, Nellie Dargon, goes missing. Jay sees Johnno meeting a local criminal, Wayne. Jay arrests Wayne, who admits dealing heroin; Johnno arrives and tells Jay to lay off, as Wayne is his informer. He tells Jay that Robbo is involved in the drugs trade. From a distance, Jay watches Wayne being killed by his associates. He finds Nellie's body in the desert.

Tipped off by Johnno, Jay searches Mary's house and finds bags of cocaine. He calls the dealers and arranges a handover in a remote desert spot. As he waits there, two vehicles pull up and a shootout ensues. From a high vantage point, Johnno provides Jay with supporting fire but is shot dead by Pete. Jay kills Pete and the other gang members, who include Robbo and Sam. Evidence in Sam's car suggests that he was Julie's killer.

Night Moves

USA/Brazil 2013
Director: Kelly Reichardt

Green war: Alia Shawkat, Jesse Eisenberg

Reviewed by Adam Nayman

See Feature on page 56

Here's how good a filmmaker Kelly Reichardt is. She can pack an entire movie's worth of meaning into a sliver of onscreen space, and do it so subtly that even attentive viewers might miss the trick. Driving away from the hydroelectric dam they've just partially blown up via a payload of homemade explosives, eco-radicals Josh (Jesse Eisenberg), Dena (Dakota Fanning) and Harmon (Peter Sarsgaard) sit in stony silence, framed in a static three-shot that lets us study their faces for traces of anxiety or triumph. This is arthouse filmmaking 101, the impassive face as the gateway to the tortured soul, etc. But the real meaning of the image has been pushed all the way to the back of the frame. Their car's rear window is occluded by a piece of tarp, so that even though the bobbing of their bodies and the gliding momentum of the sound design tells us that they're on the road, there's no clear indication of forward progress. As positioned just so by Reichardt and cinematographer Christopher Blauvelt, the characters aren't just running on empty – they're also going nowhere fast.

This passage comes almost exactly midway through *Night Moves*, and it effectively slices the movie into two pieces: the planning and execution of the bombing, and its fallout, which has severe and violent consequences for the group. When the film debuted last autumn in Toronto and Venice, it was the second half that seemed to rankle even those critics sympathetic to Reichardt's work. The common complaint was that this congenitally understated director simply wasn't able to handle the heightened narrative stakes that went along with producing a pure genre exercise – in this case, a thriller containing murderous threats, narrow escapes and even a cat-and-mouse stalking sequence (maybe the most unexpected neo-neorealist detour since the Dardennes put a car chase in *L'Enfant*). Yet leaving aside the fact that Reichardt's films have increasingly come to play with generic conceits – the road-movie-without-a-car set-up of *Wendy and Lucy* (2008), the western-without-a-cowboy premise of *Meek's Cutoff* (2010) – framing the filmmaker's delicacy as a handicap seems an unfair (and not so subtly gendered) criticism. Reichardt is not a shrinking violet, and in scene after tightly ratcheted scene, her direction proves equal to the late-blooming hothouse

Credits and Synopsis

Produced by
Neil Kopp
Anish Savjani
Producers
Chris Maybach
Saemi Kim
Rodrigo Teixeira
Written by
Jon Raymond
Kelly Reichardt
Cinematographer
Christopher Blauvelt
Editor
Kelly Reichardt
Production Designer
Elliott Hostetter
Music
Jeff Grace
Sound Designer
Kent Sparling
Costume Designer
Vicki Farrell

©Tipping Point Productions, LLC
Production Companies
Maybach Film Productions, RT Features and filmscience present a Kelly Reichardt film in association with De Leon Productions
Executive Producers
Saerom Kim
Lourenço Sant'Anna
Alejandro De Leon
Todd Haynes
Larry Fessenden

CAST
Jesse Eisenberg
Josh
Dakota Fanning
Dena
Peter Sarsgaard
Harmon
Alia Shawkat
Surprise
Logan Miller
Dylan
Kai Lennox
Sean
Katherine Waterston
Anne

Dolby Digital
In Colour
[1.78:1]

Distributor
Soda Pictures

Oregon, the present. Twentysomething environmentalist Josh and college dropout Dena plan to blow up a massive hydroelectric dam with the help of Harmon, an older ex-Marine with knowledge of explosives. They purchase a boat (called Night Moves) and huge amounts of fertiliser, trying not to arouse suspicion in the process. The plan is successful but there are news reports the next day that a camper staying in the area of the dam has gone missing; the trio assume that he was injured or killed in the blast. Dena is especially spooked, and Josh and Harmon fear that she's going to turn them in. Driven mad by paranoia and sublimated sexual desire, Josh murders Dena and heads out on the road alone.

atmosphere of the script (which she wrote with her regular co-writer Jonathan Raymond).

In terms of its characters, *Night Moves* isn't all that different from Reichardt's earlier films. Introverted commune-dweller Josh could be a younger, more stringently ideological version of *Old Joy*'s counterculture warriors, while Dena's little-girl-lost act resembles Wendy in *Wendy and Lucy* (the difference being that she seems to have taken a little bit of money with her on her way off the grid). Both of them are unhappy with the status quo and seek to change it, and it's not as if the film belittles their aspirations: the worst you can say about them at the beginning is that they're impatient, which might also be a virtue in the face of widespread, rapacious, environmentally ruinous corporate practices.

Reichardt's sympathies have always been with the dropouts and self-styled rebels, dating all the way back to her fine 1994 debut *River of Grass* – a wry Floridian riff on *Badlands* in which the thrill-killers don't hurt anybody – and she's been similarly consistent in her depiction of depleted lefty politics. Her movies orbit around characters who seem defeated rather than energised by their core principles. This is precisely why Josh's arc, skilfully acted by Eisenberg in a role that's only superficially cast to type, is so chilling. His act of praxis literally blows up in somebody else's face, so he becomes an even truer believer in response. This purity of thought is the opposite of enlightenment; it's the murky darkness of dogma, clouded even further by a helplessly guilty conscience. It's a case of contents under pressure, and in a movie explicitly structured around an explosion, we're well attuned to the possibility of something bursting out.

The fraught psychology of a young radical coping with the ultimate meaning of his actions is an unusual and troubling subject. The mutual paranoia and evasive manoeuvres that exist among a band of conspirators trying to avoid detection is a little bit more familiar, however, and neither Dena nor Harmon feels like a fully realised character – a suspicion borne out by how closely Reichardt focuses on Josh in the home stretch. Still, Fanning and Sarsgaard are both credible (the latter has lately cornered the market in a kind of earnest sleaziness and uses it well here) and it's probably worth suggesting at this point that Reichardt is one of the best American directors of actors (at least in the non-dialogue-driven division). By now, it's a given that her films are going to be pensive and subdued – and *Night Moves* is no exception – and yet time and again the hesitancy and ruefulness seem to belong to the people on screen rather than being forced on them from on high.

The potential pitfalls of telling what is essentially the same story of alienation and exclusion from the mainstream over and over again are mitigated by the narrative and tonal variations that Reichardt has introduced over the years. *Night Moves* is cruel and paranoid where *Old Joy* was tender and elegiac, but both movies (and really all her movies) are taking place in the latter's "falling-tear-shaped universe", where tragedy seems at once inevitable and entirely self-willed. It's a contradiction that could drive a person crazy, and in *Night Moves* – which is finally a very scary film – it absolutely does.

The Notorious Mr. Bout

Directors: Tony Gerber, Maxim Pozdorovkin
Certificate 12A 89m 48s

Reviewed by Calum Marsh

Viktor Bout, a Russian arms smuggler, is guilty not so much of causing death as readily facilitating it. That distinction is at the heart of *The Notorious Mr. Bout*, Tony Gerber and Maxim Pozdorovkin's documentary about the rise and fall of Bout's precarious empire. When Bout stood trial in the US in 2011, as a knowing aid to international terrorists, it was widely felt that the evidence marshalled by the prosecution – mainly a recording of his rather oblivious involvement in a DEA sting operation – had been manufactured in desperation and in lieu of more legitimate legal recourse. It was textbook entrapment; the presiding judge disapproved, and gave Bout the minimum mandatory sentence of 25 years, exonerating him in the eyes of his admirers and defenders.

The Notorious Mr. Bout makes two things about this case quite clear. The first is that the Americans, eager to maintain a pretence of international control in the wake of 9/11, sought to quash Bout's operations only when his celebrity made his transgressions impossible to ignore – for a while it seems as if Gerber and Pozdorovkin are conspiring to prove Bout nothing more than a well-meaning scapegoat. But the second thing the film makes clear is that Bout's moral guilt is unquestionable. Gerber and Pozdorovkin weave Bout's own home movies (he was something of a budding documentarian) with news footage chronicling the international fallout of his actions, and the result is a portrait of evil at its most hapless and, indeed, banal. As one commentator puts it: "He is not a villain. He is a fool."

Turnabout: Viktor Bout

Credits and Synopsis

Producers
Tony Gerber
Maxim Pozdorovkin
Director of Photography
Tony Gerber
Editor
Ars Troitski
Pax Wassermann
Music
Fall on Your Sword
Will Bates
Supervising Sound Editor
Ryan M. Price
Production Company
Market Road Films
Executive Producers
Nick Fraser
Lynn Nottage
Kate Townsend
In Colour
[1.85:1]
Part-subtitled
Distributor
Kaleidoscope Entertainment

A documentary chronicling the criminal career of Russian arms smuggler Viktor Bout, who was arrested following a sting operation in Thailand in 2008. The film flashes back to chronicle the rise of Bout's smuggling empire from its beginnings as a legitimate transportation business.

Obvious Child

Director: Gillian Robespierre
Certificate 15 84m 32s

Reviewed by Calum Marsh

Donna Stern (Jenny Slate), the slobby, vulgar hero of Gillian Robespierre's new comedy *Obvious Child*, marches into her doctor's office for a pregnancy test and, finding herself knocked up and newly jobless, casually orders an abortion as if it were a special at KFC. This apparently unprecedented nonchalance, to judge from the press that has crystallised around the film since its premiere at Sundance this January, is *Obvious Child*'s most significant feature by far, and indeed much continues to be made of its groundbreaking attitude towards a procedure undertaken by more than a million women in the US every year. Hollywood, it's true, does not exactly have an encouraging track record when it comes to contemporary body politics and reproductive rights, and Robespierre deserves credit for illustrating the realities of abortion with sensitivity and candour (and, no less importantly, a sense of humour). But it's rather too easy to conflate political substance with artistic merit – to grant a free pass to any film with whose ideology we happen to agree. A progressive sensibility does not a good film make.

To that end, *Obvious Child* is something of a mixed bag. On the one hand, it has a conspicuously scripted quality that lends many of its story beats a sitcom-like tidiness, which has the effect of flattening out any sense of nuance or complication. Characters are often whisked from simple problem to convenient solution with only the briefest detour into misunderstanding, and you soon get the sense that plot hurdles are being manufactured in order to stretch an HBO pilot-sized story into self-contained feature length (which, at 83 minutes, it barely achieves). In this the comparisons to Lena Dunham's *Girls* are unavoidable – young intellectual women stumble towards happiness in Brooklyn – and one wonders whether Robespierre might not have been better served by the serialised format afforded by long-form cable TV. As it stands, beholden to the three-act structure, she simply falls back on convention, conspiring to forge a dramatically coherent arc by

Slob story: Jenny Slate

borrowing from the playbook of Syd Field.

Robespierre proves more adept at handling the naturalism of small moments than the artifice of the film at large and, perhaps unsurprisingly, *Obvious Child* is at its best when it indulges the improvisatory riffing of individual scenes. Slate, who has experience on *Saturday Night Live*, is as much fun to watch clowning around in the bedroom as tearing through a stand-up set on stage, and her natural charisma is nearly enough to carry the picture even when the screenplay lets her down. She quite easily handles the demands on her dignity: she cries, pisses and farts her way through the many moments of body humour with all the vigour of a Jonah Hill or Seth Rogen, and it's one of the pleasures of the film to see a young woman enjoying the full range of vulgarity typically reserved for male comedians, and doing so gleefully. It's only when Robespierre demands of her something more conventional that Slate seems out of her element. A parental heart to heart, in particular, rings totally false, either because Robespierre and Slate aren't equipped to deal with the requisite turns of the romantic-comedy or because they're only feigning interest. Either way it seems a poor fit. Better for both to cut the weepy stuff and stick to what they know best: gross-out gags and jokes about abortion.

Credits and Synopsis

Producer
Elisabeth Holm
Written by
Gillian Robespierre
Director of Photography
Chris Teague
Editor
Casey Brooks
Production Designer
Sara K. White
Music
Chris Bordeaux
Sound
Micah Bloomberg
Brennan McVicar
Costume Designer
Evren Catlin

Production Companies
Rooks Next Entertainment and Sundial Pictures present
in association with Votiv Films
Executive Producers
Stefan Nowicki
Michael Sackler
Julia Godzinskaya
Sophie Vickers
Brent Stiefel
Jenny Slate
David Kaplan
Gillian Robespierre

CAST
Jenny Slate
Donna Stern
Jake Lacy
Max
Gaby Hoffman
Nellie
Gabe Liedman
Joey
Polly Draper
Nancy Stern
Richard Kind
Jacob Stern
David Cross
Sam
Paul Briganti
Ryan

Dolby Digital
In Colour
[2.35:1]

Distributor
Koch Media

Brooklyn, present day. Stand-up comic Donna is dumped by her long-time boyfriend, who is tired of hearing their relationship ridiculed in her act. Dejected, Donna begins drinking heavily. A gig goes badly, but afterwards Donna meets Max, an affable young man in the crowd. Following a drunken one-night stand with him, Donna discovers that she is pregnant. She arranges an abortion but wants to keep it secret from the would-be father. Max makes a number of attempts to start a more serious relationship with Donna, who blocks his advances for fear that he'll find out the result of their first liaison. However, Donna finds herself growing closer to him. As the date of her planned abortion looms, she decides to explain the situation to Max by working a joke about it into her stand-up act and inviting him to see her perform. He does and, shocked, he flees the club. On the morning of the operation, Max arrives at Donna's apartment and offers to escort her to the doctor's. The abortion goes off as planned as the two agree to reconcile.

The Police Officer's Wife

Germany/Switzerland 2013
Director: Philip Gröning

Arrested development: David Zimmerschied, Alexandra Finder

Reviewed by Catherine Wheatley

Following its premiere at the 2013 Venice Film Festival, where it won a Special Jury Prize, the overwhelming critical response to Philip's Gröning's *The Police Officer's Wife* has been a disappointment. That's hardly surprising in some ways: the bar had been set high by Gröning's previous theatrical release, *Into Great Silence* (2005). A 162-minute documentary meditation on the life of Carthusian monks, it was shot in an elliptical, opaque style, refusing any commentary or explanation for its subjects' decision to devote themselves to God. A similar style characterises Gröning's latest offering. Dividing his film into 59 'chapters' comprising fragments of the sequestered lives of its central characters, Gröning redeploys the formal qualities that so effectively evoked the monastic life to paint a gradually resolving portrait of domestic abuse. This time round, however, detractors of the film have branded Gröning's style pretentious and distracting and decried the lack of character psychology, deriding the very qualities that came in for such approbation in the earlier film.

The Police Officer's Wife opens with a close-up shot of birch trees, and for two minutes Gröning gently racks between two silver-hewn trunks, one of which is marked with a lurid daub of orange paint. It's like a warm-up exercise, an induction into the quiet, detailed type of attention the film will demand of us. Only after we have settled into the style can we meet blond, boyish Uwe (David Zimmerschied), the police officer of the title, his pretty wife Christine (Alexandra Finder) and their young daughter Clara (twins Pia and Chiara Kleeman). For the next 35 minutes, Gröning

Credits and Synopsis

Produced by
Philip Gröning
Matthias Esche
Philipp Kreuzer
Werner Wirsing
Screenplay
Philip Gröning
Screenplay Collaborator
Carola Diekmann
Director of Photography
Philip Gröning
Editing
Hannes Bruun
Philip Gröning

Art Director
Federica Bologna
Sound
Marc Parisotto
Uwe Dresch
Costumes
Ute Paffendorf

©Philip Gröning
Filmproduktion, Bavaria Pictures, Bavaria Film, 3L Filmproduktion GmbH+Co KG
Production Companies
The Match Factory presents a Philip Gröning Filmproduktion production in co-production with Bavaria Film, 3L Filmproduktion, Bayerischer Rundfunk, ZDF/Arte
With the support of NRW - Film und Medien Stiftung, DFFF - Deutscher Filmförderfonds, BKM - Der Beauftragte der Bundesregierung für Kultur und Medien, FFA - Filmförderungsanstalt
In collaboration with Ventura Film SA, ZDF/Arte, RSI - Radiotelevisione svizzera

CAST
Alexandra Finder
Christine
David Zimmerschied
Uwe
Pia Kleemann
Chiara Kleemann
Clara
Lars Rudolph
Kalle
Horst Rehberg
old man
Katharina Susewind
colleague

In Colour
[2.00:1]
Subtitles

Distributor
Soda Pictures

German theatrical title
Die Frau des Polizisten

Germany, the present. Young policeman Uwe and his wife Christine lead a modest provincial existence with their small daughter Clara. In 59 'chapters' we glimpse their life together. Christine stays at home with Clara; Uwe works shifts and is often tired, but seems largely happy. We watch the family eating together, playing games, gardening, singing, bathing. One night, Uwe wakes on the sofa and is unable to find Christine. When he finds her in bed, he is furious, and lashes out. After this incident, the family's life continues much as before, but bruises start to appear on Christine's body. She becomes gradually withdrawn and starts to look ill, while Uwe is more snappish and cruel. During one particularly explosive argument, Uwe hits Christine on the head, knocking her to the stone floor and leaving her in a puddle of blood. Clara cuddles her mother's inert body. Christine appears to have died but in a subsequent scene we see her in the bath with Clara. She tenderly holds the little girl under the water until Clara's eyes close and she is motionless.

(who shot the film himself) offers us short, concentrated scenes from what at first appears a mostly pedestrian family existence, including some beautiful, often sweetly funny scenes of maternal love. His camera observes Christine stroking the fine fair hair of her daughter, washing her skin, painting her tiny, ragged nails. It also watches a squirrel flitting through woods, a fox pattering over redbrick streets, a deer panting its last breaths. Throughout, the lens keeps close to its subjects: not for Gröning the cool tracking shots of modernists such as Seidl and Haneke. The aesthetic is closer to Terrence Malick, the camerawork suggestive of care, intimacy.

It's a hard film to write about because every detail seems to *matter*: from the tiny Tonka truck left under a sofa to the gentle creaking of a floorboard underfoot. Yet there's a narrative opacity that leaves us wondering what exactly we're looking at. A mysterious old man surfaces at regular intervals with no explanation – is he Uwe as an old man? A Greek chorus? A harbinger of doom? Gradually, closeness rubs up against claustrophobia and threatens to erupt into violence, as it eventually does in the film's ninth chapter, thereafter skewing everything we see, introducing strange, twisted angles and causing violet bruises to bloom across Christine's mottled skin.

After this first outburst, Grimm-like fairytale elements creep in. In one uncharacteristically stylised shot, Christine and Clara shrink to the size of dolls in their family bathtub. We realise that the pair never leave the house or speak to other people. Time seems to stretch, then stand still. Only the slow growth of the tiny plants in the courtyard and the slow dreadful spread of the blue-black patterns over Christine's body indicate that the family is not trapped in a dreadful purgatory. There's something uncanny in the atmosphere that calls to mind Lars von Trier's *Antichrist* (2009), another film about a mutually destructive family triad. There, as here, the events that eventually transpire are hopelessly inevitable. And like Von Trier's film, *The Police Officer's Wife* can worm its way under our skin and stay there.

If, that is, we give it the opportunity. At 175 minutes, *The Police Officer's Wife* is longer still than *Into Great Silence*, and make no bones about it, it is an extremely difficult – almost unendurable – watch. At the screening I attended, 50 per cent of the audience walked out before it was halfway through. But if the film has any point to make, it may well be that the freedom to walk away is not a privilege that's open to all. And perhaps that's the rub. For whereas in *Into Great Silence* the director's formal decisions emphasised the noble choice the men made every day to remain within the walls of the monastery, here it's impossible to tell why Christine remains locked within the prison of her marriage. So while it is somehow right that holy love remains ineffable, mysterious, it seems that many of us need more of an explanation for the broken, helpless and desperate kind of love shown here. The monks of *Into Great Silence* were deserving of our reverent attention. To offer the same regard to Uwe and Christine requires perhaps a greater leap of faith.

Pudsey the Dog The Movie

United Kingdom 2014
Director: Nick Moore
Certificate U 86m 59s

Reviewed by Anna Smith

From *Beethoven* to *Bolt*, your traditional family doggy movie sees a cute canine displaced from his/her habitat and thrown into new company, finding companionship and heroism. *Pudsey the Dog: The Movie* – a vehicle for the canine winner of TV show *Britain's Got Talent* – has all that in theory. This mutt moves with new family to the countryside, where mild emotional and physical perils await the children. Pudsey is on hand to lick wounds and bark for help, Lassie-style. But the script from TV writer Paul Rose is not only derivative but poorly structured. Characters are barely established and dialogue is stilted. There are perplexing camera angles, and action sequences use obvious shortcuts.

Director Nick Moore obtains wildly different registers from his performers: baddie John Sessions goes for panto, with uncomfortable results; as the voice of Pudsey, David Walliams is as amusing as the material will allow. But while this famously talented dog does a few tricks (walking on his hind legs etc), he doesn't get a chance to shine.

Pooch to the rescue: ***Pudsey the Dog***

Credits and Synopsis

Produced by
Rupert Preston
Marshall Leviten
Written by
Paul Rose
Director of Photography
Ali Asad
Editor
Dan Farrell
Production Designer
Kristian Milsted
Music Composed by
Simon Woodgate
Production Sound Mixer
Mario Mooney
Costume Designer
Colleen Kelsall
Pudsey's Trainer
Ashleigh Butler

©Simco Limited/ Dancing Dog Distribution Limited
Production Companies
Vertigo Films and Roar Global present in association with Infinite Wisdom Studios and Backwell Productions a Vertigo Films and Roar Global production
Produced by Backwell Productions Limited in association with IWS Pudsey Limited
Executive Producers
Nigel Williams
Jamie Carmichael
Mark Brittain
Ben Todd
Allan Niblo
James Richardson
Jonathan Shalit

CAST
Jessica Hynes
Gail
John Sessions
Thorne
Izzy Meikle-Small
Molly
Luke Neal
Farmer Jack
Luke Tittensor
Will
Simon Paisley Day
Reverend Treeboys
Jamie Beamish
Mr Peter
Jim Tavaré
dog catcher
Maggie Steed
Mrs Willoughby
Wendy Nottingham
Mrs Bluejay
David Walliams
voice of Pudsey
Pudsey the Dog
himself
Spike White
George
Malachy Knights
Tommy

In Colour
[1.85:1]

Distributor
Vertigo Films

UK, present day. Pudsey is a trained dog who appears in movies. Fired from a set, Pudsey heads to London, where he meets siblings Molly, George and Tommy, who are moving to the village of Chuffington with their mother. Pudsey is welcomed as the family pet. In Chuffington, the family's landlord Mr Thorne has Pudsey sent away to kennels, but Pudsey escapes. Keen to develop his land, Thorne plots to bulldoze the family's home while they are at a village fete, but Tommy is left behind. Aware of Thorne's plan, Pudsey alerts the family by barking, saving Tommy, who is in the path of a runaway bulldozer. Thorne breaks down and is taken away by ambulance.

The Purge Anarchy

USA 2014
Director: James Demonaco
Certificate 15 103m 29s

Reviewed by Kim Newman

"This is my right given to me by my government," claims a depressed woman as she opens fire on her louder sister and cheating husband, getting her own back for years of tiny put-downs and humiliations. Given their relatively mainstream pedigree, James DeMonaco's *Purge* films (produced by Michael Bay's Platinum Dunes shingle) mount a pertinent critique of a divided contemporary America. While evoking future hells of the 1970s and 80s – in the manner of Walter Hill (*The Warriors*) or John Carpenter (*Escape from New York*) – they intersperse shoot 'em ups and car chases with arguments for gun control and against vigilante values.

The Purge (2013) was a dysfunctional-family/home-under-siege story set in a gated community on lockdown during an annual government-sanctioned crime spree. Its success means that this sequel can tell a story on a bigger canvas, staging car and bike chases on the well-lit yet empty streets of 'downtown' or a flamethrower battle in a subway tunnel, and show in more detail how the invented dystopian Purge system (plainly a satiric conceit rather than a credible prophecy) is slanted to benefit the wealthy. Early on, a street gang – black men in disturbing masks, brandishing weapons and howling at passersby – seems like a stereotypical threat to a displaced lower-middle-class couple. However, the men turn out to be businesslike goons in the employ of a society of elegant, mostly elderly, monied sadists who see the murder of random strangers as the highpoint of a social event. An even more ruthless cadre of paramilitaries, assaulting the low-income districts in armoured trucks, are revealed to be government tools, targeting the poor because they aren't killing each other off quickly enough. The subtitle here is ironic – anarchy means lack of government, but the world of *The Purge* has too much societal control, even when the laws seem to be relaxed.

There's a sense that DeMonaco had several ideas for a *Purge* sequel and has braided them all together. The main thread, in which Frank Grillo's *Punisher*-like tooled-up Sergeant is distracted from a mission to avenge his son and instead becomes the protector of a group of innocents (in the spirit of *The Outlaw Josey Wales*?), jostles with the respective plights of a struggling Latina mother and daughter (who are

Street life: ***The Purge Anarchy***

targeted by a lecherous, short-lived building supervisor) and the nearly-broken-up couple trapped downtown by car sabotage, while several factions of bad guys work at cross purposes. Even the modest star power Ethan Hawke and Lena Headey brought last time out is absent, though the performances of almost all the bit-part maniacs are vivid enough to make up for the relative blandness of the good-guy quartet.

Vignettes suggest a larger world: the financial district is empty because the banks have moved all the money (raising the question of why all the crimes seen are violent – wouldn't anyone be tempted by the chance to pull a legal big-money heist?); a woman on a rooftop proclaims that she is doing God's work thinning out the herd; Michael K. Williams (Omar from *The Wire*) leads an anti-Purge revolution via podcasts and a miracle rescue; and guys on the street leeringly offer 'protection' to passing women in the hours before the Purge begins. That there still seem to be more stories to be told against the backdrop of the Purge suggests this is a series that could stretch to as many instalments as the *Saw* or *Paranormal Activity* franchises.

Credits and Synopsis

Produced by
Jason Blum
Michael Bay
Andrew Form
Brad Fuller
Sébastien K. Lemercier
Written by
James Demonaco
Director of Photography
Jacques Jouffret
Edited by
Todd E. Miller
Vince Filippone
Production Design
Brad Ricker
Music
Nathan Whitehead
Production Sound Mixer
Willie Burton
Costume Design
Hala Bahmet
Stunt Co-ordinator
Thayr Harris

©Universal Studios
Production Companies
Universal Pictures presents a Platinum Dunes/Blumhouse/ Why Not production
Executive Producers
Jeanette Volturno-Brill
Luc Etienne

CAST
Frank Grillo
Sergeant
Carmen Ejogo
Eva Sanchez
Zach Gilford
Shane
Kiele Sanchez
Liz
Zoë Soul
Cali
Edwin Hodge
stranger
Michael K. Williams
Carmelo
Justina Machado
Tanya
John Beasley
Papa Rico
Jack Conley
Big Daddy
Noel G.
Diego
Castulo Guerra
Barney

Dolby Digital/ Datasat
In Colour
[2.35:1]

Distributor
Universal Pictures International
UK & Eire

In the future, the New Founding Fathers of America have instituted the Purge, a night once a year when all crime is legal. The Sergeant, a professional soldier, intends to take advantage of this to avenge his son, killed by drunk driver Warren Grass, but finds himself protecting waitress Eva and her daughter Cali and couple Shane and Liz, who are caught outdoors on Purge night. The group are captured by a street gang and sold to a party of wealthy decadents who stage ritual hunts in an elite club. Shane is killed but the Sergeant puts up an unexpected fight. The party is invaded by anti-Purge revolutionary Carmelo, who overwhelms the decadents. Liz volunteers to join the revolutionaries. The Sergeant breaks into the Grass home but can't go through with murder. Big Daddy, a government agent using the Purge for a programme of social cleansing, is on the point of killing the Sergeant but is shot by Grass moments before the Purge ends.

Seve

United Kingdom/USA/Spain 2014
Director: John Paul Davidson
Certificate PG 124m 10s

Reviewed by Trevor Johnston

You don't have to know much about golf to appreciate the sheer ebullience of Severiano Ballesteros's approach and the mercurial grace of his touch around the greens. The man's evident charisma shines through in the vintage TV footage illuminating this otherwise earnest attempt at hagiography, and you'd defy anyone not to be moved by the contrast between the smiling insouciance of the 1970s Seve and the cancer-ravaged figure we see captured just before his tragically early demise in 2011, aged 54.

Between times, however, dismayingly bland dramatised interludes cleave to a farmboy-makes-good mythology that correctly plays on his social exclusion from the posh local club but conveniently omits to mention that his older brothers and a maternal uncle (unseen here) all made it as golf pros too. Given no shortage of archive interviews with Seve himself, it's a shame these reconstructions essentially hobble the finished item rather than open it up to a wider audience. Golf fans will buy the DVD and hit the fast-forward to get to the real gold – Seve on the back nine.

José Luis Gutiérrez

Credits and Synopsis

Producer
Stephen Evans
Jonathan Evans
Romilly Evans
Written by
Tom Hodgson
Director of Photography
John Pardue
Editor
Saska Simpson
Production Designer
Mani Martinez
Music Composed by
Stephen Warbeck
Mixer
Oscar Grau
Costume Designer
Anna Aguila

©Seve Productions
Production Companies
Renaissance Films presents in association with Fishcorb Films
Executive Producers
Christopher Little
Roger Corbi
Yan Fisher
Peter Hampden

CAST
José Luis Gutiérrez
young Seve Ballesteros
José Navar
Baldomero Ballesteros
Maria Molins
Carmen Sota
Alvar Gordejuela
Baldomero Jr
Adrián Salzedo
Manuel
Quim Ávila
Vicente
Nil Cardoner
Rafa

Dolby Digital
In Colour
[1.85:1]
Part-subtitled

Distributor
Entertainment Film Distributors

This documentary portrait of Spanish golfer Severiano 'Seve' Ballesteros intercuts archive footage of his sporting successes with dramatised sequences recreating his boyhood in northern Spain. While a second place at the 1976 British Open and victory in the same event three years later announced Ballesteros's extraordinary talent, his humble beginnings involved years of practising with a 3-iron on the local beach before he was eventually permitted to caddy at his local club, where the 13-year-old confirmed his talent by breaking the course record. A local patron set Ballesteros up as a golf professional, launching a career that brought major titles on both sides of the Atlantic and prompted a renaissance in European golf. Ballesteros's career ended in injury-enforced retirement in 2007; four years later he succumbed to a brain tumour, aged just 54.

Tammy

USA 2014
Director: Ben Falcone
Certificate 15 96m 34s

Reviewed by Thirza Wakefield

Tammy's title character has a lot in common with *Anchorman*'s Ron Burgundy. Both are uncultured, however much they may try to hide it, and both overestimate their appeal to the opposite sex. Tammy, though, hasn't the famous, groomed newscaster's excuse for an inflated ego: she works for fictional fast-food chain Topper Jacks, a job she loses, along with her cheating husband, at the opening of the film. A blues-rock fan from small-town Illinois, preferring Cheetos over Lays potato chips, Tammy represents a white, Midwestern coarseness – she's an ordinary American, buckling under the strain of the hardest time of her life.

Tammy – played by Melissa McCarthy, for whom the role was written – is a working-class woman with a middle-class out: her grandma Pearl (Susan Sarandon), who has the car and the cash. Spurred on by Tammy's calamitous morning, the pair set out on the open road, heading for Niagara Falls (Pearl's choice). They soon veer off course and into trouble with the law thanks to Pearl's hard-drinking hyperactivity. The film's humour surfaces from their mismatched companionship, Pearl's promiscuity and Tammy's well-intentioned but illogical efforts to put their road trip to rights.

The directorial debut of Ben Falcone (McCarthy's actor husband and co-writer on the project), *Tammy* is what its creators intended: a comedy about a hopeless, lubberly loser – a waster and a wipeout – who is also sympathetic. Tammy may have resources (fiscal, familial) but she hasn't any *inner* resources, and this is what makes her so likeable. This and a tendency to self-abnegation, a standing in the way of her own happiness – as with love-interest Bobby, a sweet-natured farmhand whom she fends off twice before letting him get a foot in the door. On the other hand, McCarthy – a natural dramatic actress, as well as comedic – hasn't held back on Tammy's indefensible characteristics. She's weepily self-pitying and prone to bouts of sour-grapes anger, which usually result in her knocking over whatever's nearest to hand – such as the salt and pepper shakers she sends flying at a bluegrass bar and grill after becoming offended at the abject confusion of two male diners she's tried to seduce.

For a comedy – and it *is* funny – *Tammy* has uncommon depth, and the grandmother-granddaughter relationship is realistically knotty. A diner scene midway through the film demonstrates how few conversations between close relatives are completely free of potentially detonative association with past history, how everything is

Susan Sarandon, Melissa McCarthy

GLASGOW FILM FESTIVAL
February 18 - March 1 2015

SUBMISSIONS NOW OPEN

www.glasgowfilm.org/festival/submissions

'Audiences amazing and the most enthusiastic!
Every filmmaker should experience a Glaswegian audience'
Mark Montefiore, Producer of Cas & Dylan, GFF14

18 Days ... 6 Screens ... Over 100 Films ... Over 30 Countries

CHICHESTER INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL

14th -31st August 2014

23

New Park Rd
Chichester, PO19 7XY
Box Office:
01243 786650

CHICHESTER cinema AT NEW PARK

The Chichester International Film Festival is back in August 2014 for its 23rd Edition.
Featuring the Best in UK and World Cinema,
This year with a special focus
on East European Cinema.

Launches with two
Open Air Screenings (8th & 9th Aug)
OH! WHAT A LOVELY WAR & SOME LIKE IT HOT

Opening Gala:
NIGHT TRAIN TO LISBON
Closing Gala:
MAGIC IN THE MOONLIGHT

Treasures from the Archives inc:
DEER HUNTER; TO CATCH A THIEF; LAST EMPEROR; ZULU.

Premieres, Previews, New Releases
VIOLETTE (Fra); **DEFLOWERING OF EVA VAN END** (Ned) UK Prem; **2 DAYS, 1 NIGHT** (Bel); **IN ORDER OF DISAPPEARANCE** (Nor) Eng Prem; **KEEPER OF LOST CAUSES** (Swe); **STATIONS OF THE CROSS** (Ger) Eng Prem; **HECTOR & THE PURSUIT OF HAPPINESS** (UK); **WELCOME TO NY** (Fra); **DOLL & EM** (UK); **LAUDA: 33 DAYS** (UK/Aut doc.) UK Prem; **A MOST IMPORTANT MAN** (UK); **GRAND SEDUCTION** (Can); **LAKSHMI** (Ind); **MYSTERY ROAD** (Aus)

Special Events inc.
CABINET OF DR CALIGARI with Live Organ Accompaniment.
WAR REQUIEM at Chichester Cathedral; Live performance of the **UNDER MILK WOOD JAZZ SUITE** by the Bobby Wellins Quartet in a tribute to Stan Tracey.

East Meets West: Focus on East Euro Cinema inc:
SHANGHAI GYPSY (Slo); **DVORAK IN LOVE** (Cze/UK) Tony Palmer Doc; **IDA** (UK/Pol); **MUSHROOMING** (Est) UK Prem; **BALKAN BAZAAR** (Alb) UK Prem; **PRIEST'S CHILDREN** (Cro) Eng Prem; **ZORAN, MY NEPHEW** (Ita/ Slo) Eng Prem; **THE JAPANESE DOG** (Romania) UK Premiere; **THE DON JUANS** (Cze) UK Prem.

Selective Retrospective on
Director **MICHAEL WINTERBOTTOM**
and Producer **ANDREW EATON** (left)

Commemorating WW1 inc:
LA GRANDE ILLUSION; NURSE EDITH CAVELL; FAREWELL TO ARMS (right)

Contemporary Italian Auteurs inc:
PAOLO SORENTINO; NANNI MORETTI; MATTEO GARRONE; SILVIO SOLDINI; GIANNI GREGORIO; ANNA ROHRWACHER
MAFIA Special Event -
MAFIA ONLY KILLS IN SUMMER + THE VOICE OF IMPASTATO.

www.chichestercinema.org

University of Chichester · EUROPA CINEMAS · PAPA JOHNS · BFI Awarding funds from The National Lottery Film Forever

freighted: Tammy, suddenly overcome with emotion, bursts out over the breakfast plate, "You were my best friend."

Sadly, the perceptive script is done a disservice by Falcone's technical inexperience. Framing is formulaic, and some of the medium shots make it appear as if McCarthy is performing into an echo chamber. Inexpert lighting renders some of the darker scenes difficult to pick out, and one suspects that the ostentatious soundtrack is a knowing substitution for formal rigour.

All the same, it's a refreshing film for its female-centric worldview; for immaculate performances by an A-class cast, including Kathy Bates, Allison Janney and Sandra Oh; and for showing that profundity of character is in reach of the contemporary Hollywood comedy.

Credits and Synopsis

Produced by
Will Ferrell
Adam McKay
Melissa McCarthy
Written by
Melissa McCarthy
Ben Falcone
Director of Photography
Russ Alsobrook
Edited by
Mike Sale
Production Designer
Jefferson Sage
Music
Michael Andrews
Sound Mixer
Michael Rayle
Costumes Designed by
Wendy Chuck

©Warner Bros. Entertainment Inc. and RatPac-Dune Entertainment LLC

Production Companies
New Line Cinema presents in association with RatPac-Dune Entertainment a Gary Sanchez/On the Day production

Executive Producers
Rob Cowan
Ben Falcone
Chris Henchy
Kevin Messick
Toby Emmerich
Richard Brener
Michael Disco

CAST
Melissa McCarthy
Tammy
Susan Sarandon
Pearl
Kathy Bates
Lenore
Allison Janney
Deb
Dan Aykroyd
Don
Mark Duplass
Bobby
Gary Cole
Earl
Nat Faxon
Greg
Toni Collette
Missi
Sandra Oh
Susanne
Ben Falcone
Keith Morgan
Sarah Baker
Becky
Rich Williams
Larry

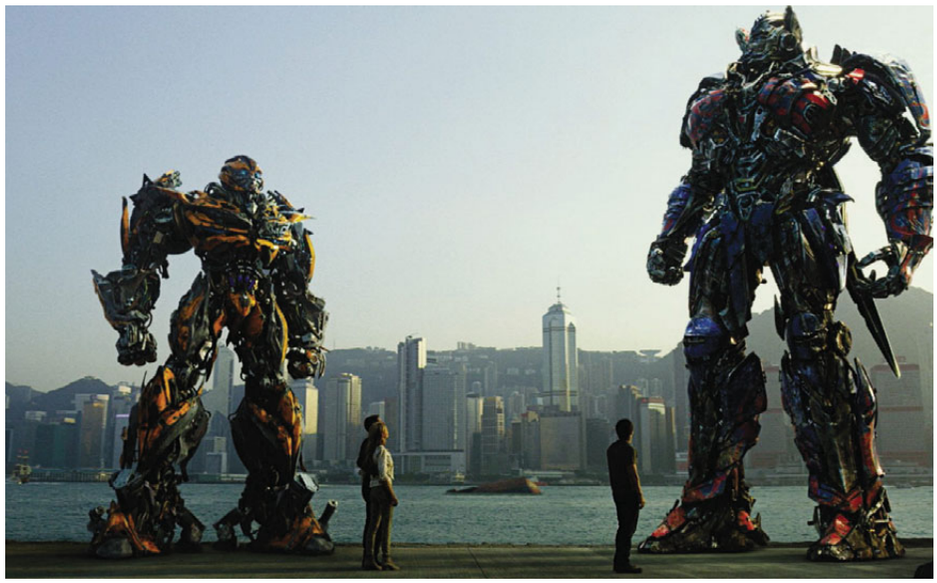
Dolby Digital/ Datasat
In Colour
Prints by
Technicolor
[1.85:1]

Distributor
Warner Bros Distributors (UK)

Midwest America, the present. After hitting a deer on the highway, Tammy is fired from fast-food chain Topper Jacks. Returning home to find her husband enjoying a luncheon with neighbour Missi, she decamps to her mother Deb's. Deb refuses to loan Tammy her car, so Tammy sets off instead with her alcoholic-diabetic grandma Pearl, who bribes her way aboard the trip with her Buick and a bundle of cash. Setting a course for Niagara Falls, they stop at a bluegrass joint, where they meet father-and-son farmers Earl and Bobby. Tammy flirts abortively with Bobby. Pearl and Earl have sex in the Buick. Following a row over breakfast, Tammy drives off upset, returning to find Pearl at a liquor store, angering the manager and buying beer for kids. Both women are taken in by the police. Pearl is held for possession of prescription drugs, so Tammy, who has been released, robs a Topper Jacks to raise bail. Pearl, who has already been bailed by Earl, persuades Tammy to return the money; she does so. They meet with Pearl's gay cousin Lenore, whose 4th July party turns ugly when Pearl publicly insults Tammy. Bobby – also at the party – expresses his liking for Tammy, who turns him down. Pearl, unwell, is taken to hospital. Tammy is apprehended for the stick-up. After 38 days in prison, she and Pearl visit Niagara Falls. Pearl has invited Bobby. He and Tammy kiss under the cascade.

Transformers Age of Extinction

USA/China 2014
Director: Michael Bay
Certificate 12A 164m 54s



Pacific dim: ***Transformers: Age of Extinction***

Reviewed by Anton Bitel

"Sequels and remakes, a bunch of crap," complains the old-timer who is closing his beautiful film theatre after "79 great years" and expressly blames movies just like *Transformers: Age of Extinction* (which is both a sequel and a cinematic reimagining of Hasbro's line of toys) for the demise of his business. The speaker knows that he has become a dinosaur – and in fact Michael Bay's latest opus opens with the extinction of the 'actual' (though entirely virtual, and 3D) dinosaurs via a transformative alien 'Seed' ripped straight out of Ridley Scott's *Prometheus* (2012) and then skips ahead to show new, 21st-century threats of extinction: not just to life as we know it but to 'homespun' pre-millennial values, and to cinema itself.

Inventor and widowed father Cade Yeager (Mark Wahlberg) is an old-fashioned kind of guy with a nostalgist's eye for redundant technology, who nonetheless takes the detritus of ages past – such as the theatre's old projector or the bullet-riddled rust-bucket of a truck mysteriously parked in its auditorium – and tries to refashion it into something new and useful, or at least strip it down for saleable assets. Significantly, none of his inventions actually works, and he can't pay the bills.

If Michael Bay's original trilogy – *Transformers* (2007), *Transformers: Revenge of the Fallen* (2009),

Credits and Synopsis

Produced by
Lorenzo di Bonaventura
Tom DeSanto
Don Murphy
Ian Bryce
Written by
Ehren Kruger
Based on Hasbro's Transformers action figures
Director of Photography
Amir Mokri
Edited by
William Goldenberg
Roger Barton
Paul Rubell
Production Designer
Jeffrey Beecroft
Music
Steve Jablonsky
Supervising Sound Editors/Designers
Ethan Van Der Ryn
Erik Aadahl
Visual Effects and Animation
Industrial Light & Magic
Visual Effects
Method
Stunt Co-ordinator
Mike Gunther

©Paramount Pictures

Corporation
Production Companies
Paramount Pictures presents in association with Hasbro
In association with China Movie Channel/Jiaflix
A Tom DeSanto/Don Murphy production
A di Bonaventura Pictures production
An Ian Bryce production
A Michael Bay film
Executive Producers
Steven Spielberg
Michael Bay
Brian Goldner
Mark Vahradian

CAST
Mark Wahlberg
Cade Yeager
Stanley Tucci
Joshua Joyce
Kelsey Grammer
Harold Attinger
Nicola Peltz
Tessa Yeager
Jack Reynor
Shane Dyson
Sophia Myles
Darcy Tirrel
Bingbing Li
Su Yueming
Titus Welliver
James Savoy
T.J. Miller
Lucas Flannery
Peter Cullen
voice of Optimus Prime
Frank Welker
voice of Galvatron
John Goodman
voice of Hound
Ken Watanabe
voice of Drift
Mark Ryan
voice of Lockdown

Dolby Atmos/ Datasat
In Colour
[2.35:1]
[1.90:1] (IMAX prints)

Some screenings presented in 3D
IMAX prints
166m 3s

Distributor
Paramount Pictures UK

The Cretaceous period. Spaceships use explosive 'Seeds' to turn Earth's living matter into an alien metal used to create Transformers.

Present day, five years after Autobot Transformers and their enemies the Decepticons fought a major battle in Chicago. Traces of the alien metal, dubbed 'Transformium', are being used by inventor Joshua Joyce and his multinational corporation KSI to create new weapons, upgraded from parts of Decepticons and Autobots alike. These have been captured by Harold Attinger's covert CIA unit Cemetery Wind, with help from a spaceship-flying Transformer called Lockdown, who is willing to provide a Transformium-producing Seed in exchange for Autobot leader Optimus Prime, whom the Transformers' Creators want to subjugate.

An old truck salvaged by Texan widower and inventor Cade Yeager turns out to be the injured Optimus. Cade, his teen daughter Tessa, her boyfriend Shane and Optimus escape Cemetery Wind, rejoin four other fugitive Autobots and infiltrate KSI's city headquarters. Joshua unleashes his synthetic Transformer, Galvatron, not realising that it has been infected with the brain of Decepticon leader Megatron. In the ensuing fight, Lockdown captures Optimus and Tessa, taking both to his spaceship. Cade, Shane and the Autobots rescue them, as well as some captive Dinobots.

Harold and Joshua move the Seed to their Beijing offices. As Galvatron turns Joshua's Transformers into a Decepticon army, Cade, Shane, Tessa and the Autobots flee to Hong Kong with Joshua. In a pitched battle, Optimus tames and rides the Dinobots, killing Harold and Lockdown. Optimus flies into space to face the Creators.

Transformers: Dark of the Moon (2011) – replayed lines ("Let's roll") and motifs (urban terror, desert warfare, torture, external rendition) from Bush's War on Terror as a little boy's – or reactionary manchild's – gung-ho sandpit fantasy, then *Transformers: Age of Extinction* is something of a reboot, and (maybe) a rethink. Following the widescale destruction of Chicago at the end of the third film, we are now in a very new era, where humankind's former allies the Autobots have been forced into hiding along with the satanic Decepticons, and secretive government agent Harold Attinger (Kelsey Grammer) is working with Lockdown, a robotic extraterrestrial, to rid the world of Transformers for ever while harnessing their technology for new weapons.

There is also an entirely new cast of human characters, coming from a rather different, rural working-class socioeconomic bracket to mark America's shift into recession – although when Cade resparks the engines of Autobot leader Optimus Prime (voiced as ever by Peter Cullen), he might just have found an unorthodox way, via intercontinental dashes and interplanetary skirmishes, to see his daughter Tessa (Nicola Peltz) through college after all.

The landscape of this film is still littered with the iconography of the post-9/11 dispensation: the identities of wanted Decepticons are displayed on soldiers' playing cards; a so-called enemy (Transformer) combatant is interned and repeatedly electrocuted; and Attinger deploys a Bushian with-us-or-against-us line. Yet Ehren Kruger's script has lost the blind chauvinism of the first three films (the last two of which he penned himself). Here the wrong targets are wilfully Gitmo-ised; here deadly black ops are conducted in the name of freedom for corrupt, self-serving motives; here deals are secretly made with the devil. And here the usually Christ-like Optimus announces that he will break his golden rule of never harming a human – and duly does so – making him a more morally nuanced character along with the humans he no longer defends without question.

Overall, this is an improvement on what has preceded, with more shading to its politics, more easily distinguished robots and more varied set pieces (including a spaceship interior and a vertigo-inducing cable-walk high above a cityscape). Still, we are talking baby steps, in a franchise that remains big, dumb nonsense. Hardly the subtlest of directors, Bay handles the film's climactic Hong Kong sequences with all the racial sensitivity of a bull in a China shop, and reduces the 17-year-old Tess all at once to barely legal sex object ('Age of Consent' might have been a better title), damsel in need of rescue, and item of property handed down from patriarchal father to older boyfriend (Jack Reynor) – a pattern already familiar from Bay's *Armageddon* (1998). Like the outmoded Autobots who must face up to their own version 2.0s in the film, or like the resurrected Dinobots who help them, Bay is a dinosaur-like throwback to the 80s, trying to save a post-millennial cinema that he no longer understands – or perhaps understands too well – with his outsized spectacle, lumbering effects and small-brained narrative. Still, perhaps some Cretaceous-era values are better left buried.

Two Days, One Night

Belgium/France/Italy/The Netherlands 2014
Directors: Jean-Pierre Dardenne, Luc Dardenne

For or against: Marion Cotillard

Reviewed by Tony Rayns

See Feature on page 64

Although it doesn't look or behave like a Hollywood feelgood movie about personal growth, *Two Days, One Night* is in essence just such a film. Jean-Pierre and Luc Dardenne, who created the character for Marion Cotillard after meeting her during the shoot of *Rust and Bone* (2012), focus their film on Sandra Bya, a working-class mother who has had a nervous breakdown. Returning to her husband and kids from the hospital, she finds that she's lost her job in a small factory making solar panels. Her boss Dumont has given her 16 workmates the choice between having her back or working longer hours and receiving a bonus (the underlying problem is that the company has discovered it can make do without her, although competition from Asia is also a factor) and most of them have opted for the cash. She learns that the workshop foreman Jean-Marc lobbied against her.

Egged on by her saintly husband Manu and her more-than-supportive workmate Juliette, Sandra asks Dumont to ballot the workers again, in secret this time, and spends a weekend canvassing her colleagues one by one, hoping to win them over to her side. Some of them refuse to budge and the setbacks threaten Sandra's mental equilibrium, but there's enough good news to keep her going. No spoilers here (don't read the synopsis if you don't want to know how things pan out), but the film ends with Sandra at her happiest, seemingly on the road

Credits and Synopsis

Producers
Jean-Pierre Dardenne
Luc Dardenne
Denis Freyd
Written by
Jean-Pierre Dardenne
Luc Dardenne
Director of Photography
Alain Marcoen
Editor
Marie-Hélène Dozo
Production Designer
Igor Gabriel
Sound Mixer
Thomas Gauder
Costume Designer
Maïra Ramedhan-Levi

©Les Films du Fleuve, Archipel 35, Bim Distribuzione, Eyeworks, RTBF (Télévision Belge), France 2 Cinéma
Production Companies
Les Films du Fleuve, Archipel 35, Bim, Eyeworks present in co-production with France 2 Cinéma, RTBF (Télévision Belge), Belgacom with the participation of Canal+, Ciné+, France Télévisions
Produced with the assistance of the Centre du Cinéma et de l'Audiovisuel de la Fédération Wallonie-Bruxelles and of VOO, Flanders Audiovisual Fund and of Eurimages with the support of Wallonie, the Tax Shelter of the Federal Government of Belgium, Casa Kafka Pictures, Belfius, Cinéfinance, Eyeworks in association with Wild Bunch, Diaphana, Cinéart with the support of the European Union MEDIA Programme
Executive Producers
Delphine Tomson

CAST
Marion Cotillard
Sandra Bya
Fabrizio Rongione
Manu
Pili Groyne
Estelle
Simon Gaudry
Maxime
Catherine Salée
Juliette
Baptiste Sornin
M. Dumont
Philippe Jeusette
Yvon
Yohan Zimmer
Jean-Marc Jérôme
Christelle Cornil
Anne
Serge Koto
Alphonse

Dolby Digital
In Colour
[1.85:1]
Subtitles

Distributor
Curzon Film World

Belgian/French theatrical title
Deux jours, une nuit

Seraing, Wallonia. Friday. Sandra Bya, recently home from hospital where she has been treated for depression, wants to return to her job at Solwal, making solar panels. But her boss Dumont has balloted her 16 workmates in her absence, offering them the choice between having her back or working longer hours and receiving a bonus of up to €1,000 – and the majority has voted for the bonus. On the grounds that the foreman Jean-Marc lobbied against her, Sandra asks for a second, secret ballot on Monday morning. Dumont agrees. Urged on and encouraged by her husband Manu and helped by her supportive workmate Juliette, Sandra spends Saturday and Sunday visiting her workmates in their homes, explaining how much she needs the income from the job and asking them to back her. Some refuse outright, usually explaining how much they need the bonus, but others agree; the only violent response comes from Jérôme, who punches her and their workmate Yvon. On Sunday morning, three successive refusals upset the still-fragile Sandra so much that she takes an overdose of Xanax; Manu rushes her to hospital to have her stomach pumped. But news that Anne has left her brutal husband and switched her vote revives Sandra and she makes two more housecalls in the evening. On Monday morning the vote splits evenly for and against Sandra. Dumont proposes a compromise: he will take Sandra back after a rest, but lay off fixed-term employee Alphonse instead. Sandra declines this offer and leaves happy.

to recovery at last. Feelgood or what?

The directors dramatise Sandra's emotional highs and lows across the weekend, rather dubiously using the tight timeframe and the threat of a relapse into breakdown to generate low-key suspense. Predictably, her mood upswings follow encounters with workmates who promise to vote for her; these episodes climax after a particularly heartwarming 'yes' on the Sunday evening when she, Manu and newly single workmate Anne sing along with Them's 'Gloria' on the car stereo. Equally predictably, her downswings follow refusals: three in a row on Saturday morning prompt a return home to rest and a nightmare in which her son drowns, and three more on Sunday morning prompt a Xanax overdose and a race to hospital to get her stomach pumped. The setbacks, though, are easily overcome – perhaps a little too easily since she's back on the trail of elusive workmates just an hour after leaving the hospital.

As usual in Dardenne films, such melodramatic contrivances are softened by their integration into the naturalistic flow of incidents, by the overall sensitivity to social and economic realities and by the generally credible performances. (Their trademark 'realism' is hard-won: in this case, we're told, there was a full month of rehearsals with the cast following two months of location-familiarisation exercises, all recorded on video to be minutely picked over.) Their insistence on filming in sequence probably also helps, although this particular script is by definition so episodic that it could not have made much difference either way. Cotillard is anyway integrated into a Dardenne 'stock company' which has been through these paces before.

Further careful contrivances underpin the narrative: the solar-panel workshop is small enough not to have a unionised workforce, so the issue of solidarity or non-solidarity with Sandra becomes strictly personal and isn't complicated by labour politics, and the workmates Sandra has to plead with represent a precise cross-section of the Belgian small-town demographic, including a young black immigrant, an Arabic family, those struggling with the weekly bills, those looking to upgrade their patio and a couple of vicious and seemingly misogynistic men. There may well be small factories with this range of workers in provincial Belgium, but it's more important to the directors that their characters should be fully representative of wage-slave society.

The film's sociological aspect underpins its core fable of the vulnerable individual who gains strength and confidence by fighting her corner, greatly abetted by Cotillard's very committed performance as a woman on the verge of another nervous breakdown. But you could equally read the film the other way round: with the feelgood thrust of the narrative serving to highlight the problems of competitiveness and lack of solidarity in present-day society. The Dardenne brothers are not exactly 'old Labour' nostalgists in the Ken Loach vein, but they are politicised moralists who want their films to deliver op-ed analyses as well as sentimental kicks. In terms of the British political spectrum, the way they finesse social commentary wrapped up in feelgood drama makes them not so much 'New Labour' as left-leaning Lib Dems.

The Unbeatables

Director: Juan José Campanella

Reviewed by Matthew Taylor

Both the most expensive Argentine movie to date and a record-breaker at the domestic box office, *The Unbeatables* – which screened at last year's London Film Festival as *Foosball* – represents a curious change of pace for director Juan José Campanella, whose dark crime epic *The Secret in Their Eyes* surprised many by winning the 2010 Oscar for best foreign language film. Campanella has had an eclectic career before and since that success, tackling a variety of genres – romantic comedy, film noir, police procedurals – and switching regularly between homegrown and US-based projects (most recently contributing to AMC's Silicon Prairie drama *Halt and Catch Fire*). Still, few probably expected his first post-Oscar feature to be a 3D animation that takes on the likes of Pixar at their own game.

The Unbeatables is based on a story by the late humorist Roberto Fontanarrosa, and what's immediately evident about it is how accomplished the animation really is, right from the droll opening pastiche of *2001: A Space Odyssey* (the dawn of man revised as the birth of football). With *Despicable Me*'s Sergio Pablos on board as adviser, the CG work here is beautifully crisp and evocative, with colour deployed imaginatively throughout. It's certainly in a different league from the film's plot, an altogether predictable underdog narrative that nevertheless unfurls with some verve. This is neatly framed as a bedtime story recited by a father to his reluctant, tablet-fixated son. It tells how Amadeo, a timid youth obsessed with foosball (table football), is forced to make a stand when his former tormentor Flash, now a megalomaniacal football star, returns home. At stake is not only the survival of Amadeo's village – Flash plans to build the world's largest football stadium in its place – but the love of childhood sweetheart Laura. When all seems lost, a miracle occurs: Amadeo's foosball players come to life and join forces against Flash.

The Unbeatables

The detailed rendering of these miniature plastic heroes, with their outsize egos and various states of scuffed wear, is a highlight. A well-utilised voice cast in this English version includes Rob Brydon, Alistair McGowan and Peter Serafinowicz, who have fun with their broadly stereotypical makeup – the Scots hard case, the Italian prima donna, the dreadlocked hippie etc – although the script has its fair share of flat moments (a line like "I've always dreamt of visiting Stoke" jars with the obviously Latin American setting). Campanella, though, finds plenty of wit elsewhere, from wacky set pieces (a hurtling chase through a rubbish dump, vertiginous chaos at a fairground) to bountiful references both cinematic (*Apocalypse Now*, *The Seventh Seal*, spaghetti westerns) and political (a scene in which the village mayor flees by helicopter nods directly to the identical exit of former Argentine president Fernando de la Rúa during the unrest of 2001). Flash's grotesquely tasteless mansion is a triumph of design, with crass mock-ups of classic sculptures and rooms full of genetically modified animals, including a Dali-esque ostrich with a football boot for a beak. Also welcome are the sly jabs at football's corporate venality, illustrated by the endless list of disreputable stadium sponsors that accompanies a crucial match. There are few surprises, but the slick visuals, piquant humour and genial feeling for the gaming of yesteryear make it a hardy challenger for the animation titans north of the equator.

Credits and Synopsis

Producers
Manuel Polanco
Mikel Lejarza
Mercedes Gamero
Jorge Estrada Mora
Juan José Campanella
Gastón Gorali
UK Screenplay
Juan José Campanella
Michael Smith
Richard Smith
David Burgess
Victor Glynn
Story
Juan José Campanella
Eduardo Sacheri
Gastón Gorali
Áxel Kuschevatzky
Inspired by *The Memoirs of a Right-winger* by Roberto Fontanarrosa
Director of Photography
Félix Monti
Editor
Juan José Campanella
Production Designer
Nelson Luty
Mariano Epelbaum
Original Score
Emilio Kauderer
Sound
José Luís Díaz
Directors of Animation
Mario Serie
Sergio Pablos
Federico Radero
Production Companies
Jempsa, Plural Jempsa, Atresmedia Cine and 369 Productions in association with 100 Bares Productions and Catmandu Entertainment
In association and collaboration with Canal+ and Telefe with the participation of Antena 3 and La Sexta and the support of ICAA and INCA
A Vertigo Films release
Jorge Estrada Mora presents a Juan José Campanella film
Executive Producers
Diego Rosner
Roberto Schroeder
Gustavo Ferrada

VOICE CAST
Rupert Grint
Amadeo
Rob Brydon
Rico
Anthony Head
Flash
Ralf Little
Skip
Alex Norton
Gregor
Peter Serafinowicz
Loco
Eve Ponsonby
Laura
Alistair McGowan
Ray

Some screenings presented in 3D

Dolby Digital
In Colour

[2.35:1]

Distributor
Vertigo Films

Argentine theatrical title
Metegol

A village in Argentina, present day. A father tells his son the story of a shy boy, Amadeo, and his beloved foosball (table football) team.

Challenged to a foosball game by village bully Flash, Amadeo wins. Humiliated, Flash leaves the village with a football agent, who promises him riches. Years later, Amadeo is still devoted to foosball – and still in love with childhood sweetheart Laura. Flash, now a football megastar, returns to announce that he has purchased the entire village and plans to build the world's biggest stadium in its place. He whisks off the reluctant Laura to his mansion. When the bar where Amadeo plays foosball is demolished, Amadeo's tears miraculously bring the uprooted foosball players to life. Some of them are captured by Flash. Helped by the remaining players, Amadeo infiltrates Flash's mansion and rescues Laura and the captives. Flash challenges Amadeo to a real football match, promising to relinquish ownership of the village if he loses. With assistance from the foosball players, Amadeo's team of amateurs valiantly battle Flash's professionals, but Flash cheats during the last seconds to secure victory. The crowd turns on Flash and his agent deserts him.

Finishing the story, the father reveals that he is Amadeo. He's now married to Laura and still has his foosball players.

Walking on Sunshine

Ireland/United Kingdom/Italy/USA 2014
Directors: Max and Dania
Certificate 12A 97m 1s

Reviewed by Anna Smith

This 'jukebox musical' wears its lack of originality with pride. Not only do its characters regularly break into song with cover versions of 80s pop hits, but their stories echo many a soap opera or Jane Austen novel. Two sisters, Maddie and Taylor, are holidaying in Italy, one coincidentally marrying the other's ex. For purely dramatic reasons, Taylor neglects to tell Maddie that she used to date Raf. Meanwhile, the plot is manipulated to fit the words of popular songs, from Madonna's 'Holiday' to The Human League's 'Don't You Want Me'. In many ways the film is a poor successor to 2008's similarly themed *Mamma Mia!* – backing tracks resemble those on a karaoke machine and it's easy to tell which actors were cast for their singing (Leona Lewis) or their looks (groom-to-be Giulio Berruti). Supporting characters follow basic stereotypes: comedian Katy Brand is the large and lusty pal, Greg Wise the slippery ex. Dialogue is simplistic.

But, like directors Max Giwa and Dania Pasquini's *StreetDance* series, there's something charming about *Walking on Sunshine*'s gusto: it basks in the glow of its own silliness with a defiant energy, imagining a world where any problem can be solved with a rousing singalong, a large glass of wine and a lingering look at an Italian torso. Cheap escapism defined. S

Credits and Synopsis

Directed by
Max and Dania [i.e. Max Giwa Dania Pasquini]
Produced by
Allan Niblo
James Richardson
Caroline Levy
Screenplay
Joshua St. Johnston
Director of Photography
Philipp Blaubach
Editor
Robin Sales
Production Designer
Sophie Becher
Music Composed and Produced by
Anne Dudley
Production Sound Mixer
Steve Haywood
Costume Designer
Leonie Hartard
Choreographer
Litza Bixler

©WOS Distribution (Ireland) Limited
Production Companies
Vertigo Films presents in association with
IM Global a Vertigo Films production
Produced with the support of the Apulia Film Commission
Executive Producers
Rupert Preston
Nigel Williams
Nick Love
Al Munteanu
Stuart Ford

CAST
Annabel Scholey
Maddie
Hannah Arterton
Taylor
Giulio Berruti
Raf
Greg Wise
Doug
Katy Brand
Lil
Leona Lewis
Elena
Danny Kirrane
Mikey
Giulio Corso
Enrico
Tiziana Schiavarelli
Tiziana
Andrea Coppola
priest

In Colour [2.35:1]

Distributor
Vertigo Films

Puglia, the present. Maddie, a young British woman, is preparing to marry Italian Raf, unaware that he used to date her sister Taylor, who is visiting. Taylor keeps the relationship a secret from Maddie but there is still an attraction between her and Raf. Maddie's ex Doug arrives and tries to win her back. Maddie finds out about Taylor and Raf; Taylor sets off for the airport. She is persuaded to return for the wedding but Maddie cancels it, realising that she and Raf are not meant for each other. Taylor and Raf unite. Maddie sends Doug packing.

We Gotta Get Out of This Place

Directors: Zeke Hawkins, Simon Hawkins
Certificate 15 92m 16s

Reviewed by Trevor Johnston

When any Texas noir has the temerity to make a central character's knowledge of pulp maestro Jim Thompson a key to the plot, you know the filmmakers are setting themselves up for a fall. The intent here is to weave a typically Thompsonian tale of iniquity and double-cross with teenagers centre stage for upfront box-office appeal. However, the film's story of the toxic fallout among friends blackmailed into committing a robbery has very little impact, since creepily smug macho-man BJ and his crime-fiction-loving girlfriend Sue make a highly unlikely couple to begin with, especially given the presence of BJ's sensitive friend Bobby, who like Sue is college-bound.

Giff, a white-trash heavy (a crassly written and performed role), provides some functional threat, but it is dissipated by a showdown that exposes the rickety narrative timeline and blows any tension by unwisely teasing us with the possible appearance of local crime-lord 'Big Red' when William Devane, prominently billed in the opening credits, has yet to pitch up on screen. S

Corn-fed: *We Gotta Get Out of This Place*

Credits and Synopsis

Producers
Justin X. Duprie
Brian Udovich
Written by
Dutch Southern
Director of Photography
Jeff Bierman
Edited by
Simon Hawkins
Production Designer
Seong-Jin Moon
Original Music
Jonathan Keevil
Costume Designer
Autumn Rae Steed
Production Company
Rough & Tumble Films presents

CAST
Mackenzie Davis
Sue
William Devane
Big Red
Logan Huffman
BJ
Jeremy Allen White
Bobby
Jon Gries
Sheriff Shep
Mark Pellegrino
Giff

In Colour [2.35:1]

Distributor
Metrodome Distribution Ltd

Rural Texas, present day. Teenager BJ steals cash from farm boss Giff to fund a weekend of carousing with his girlfriend Sue and best friend Bobby, who are both due to leave town for college. Bobby takes the blame for the theft, so Giff blackmails the trio into robbing the nearby cotton gin that his boss, crime kingpin Big Red, is using to front a money-laundering operation. Having discovered that Bobby and Sue are lovers, BJ sides with Giff to plot against them. On the night of the robbery, BJ thinks that he has framed Bobby and Sue for the crime, but Giff has outwitted him. Giff kills BJ to cover his tracks but is then seriously injured when Bobby drags him off an overhead gantry. Bobby survives with broken bones. Sue reveals that she tipped off Big Red, who arrives to let her and Bobby hobble away before shooting Giff dead.

Welcome to New York

USA/France 2014
Director: Abel Ferrara
Certificate 18 125m 25s

Reviewed by Tony Rayns

'Tawdry' is a term redolent of a bygone era in *S&S* reviewing, but the time has come to bring it out of retirement. Abel Ferrara's film, largely financed by the 'iconoclasts' of Wild Bunch, made waves in the Cannes market this year because it's rooted in a real-life scandal. The fascination of the Dominique Strauss-Kahn case in 2011 was that the head of the IMF, a credible socialist candidate for president of France in the election subsequently won by François Hollande, was brought down by the sensationally bathetic allegation that he had sexually assaulted an immigrant maid in a five-star hotel in Manhattan. This episode could have been dramatised in many ways: as a Rabelaisian satire in the vein of *Ubu Roi*, as a noir-ish thriller in the vein of *The Big Clock*, as a Rosi-like enquiry into the abuse of power; other options were available. Good ol' Abel *Driller Killer* Ferrara and his co-writer Chris Zois have gone for the tawdriest possible approach: a grindingly obvious morality play about sex addiction. They could have called it *Bad Lieutenant 2*.

The first quarter of the 124-minute film is thus devoted to stupendously joyless orgy scenes with an edge of mild sadomasochism, and the rest to the stir-craziness of the unreformable protagonist Devereaux in a series of prisons: the first-class prison of his wealth, the slammer in Queens where he's briefly locked in with menacing underclass types, and the expensive townhouse in Manhattan rented for him by his wife when he's allowed out on bail. There are two more sex acts in the home stretch, one consensual (with a black American law student pushed into his arms by her father, both of them clearly in awe of Devereaux's power), the other non-consensual (the attempted rape of a French woman journalist during an interview). A third looms in the closing moments, as Devereaux chats with the maid in the townhouse; the film ends with him staring into the camera, as if daring us to will him to pounce. There's no dramatic arc or learning curve; this is simply a facile sketch of a sexist thug who considers any woman, willing or not, paid or not, as fair game.

Man on wire: Gérard Depardieu

Strauss-Kahn himself isn't impressed by the opening disclaimer, which acknowledges that the film "was inspired by a court case" but insists that the characters and incidents are "entirely fictional"; he is prosecuting a lawsuit. From a viewer's perspective, the film feels most tawdry in its abject failure to offset its connoisseurship of the sleazy details of sex addiction by imagining the banking/high-society side of Devereaux's life more credibly. The character's background as an upper-echelon banker – the source of his wealth and power – is hived off into an early montage of gold bars and the minting of new dollars, while Devereaux is not given a single line to suggest his command of economics or his business acumen. His power-plays with his monstrous wife Simone (Jacqueline Bisset) are less sophisticated than any episode of *Dallas* or *Dynasty*.

Catholic-turned-Buddhist Ferrara offers us a portrait of a massively overweight man who luxuriates in the bad karma he generates wherever he goes. It's no saving grace that the film opens with a staged interview with Gérard Depardieu, explaining that he took the role because he doesn't like its real-life prototype ("I don't like politicians, I'm an anarchist"). Depardieu and Bisset do their best, but the script leaves them paddling in shit. S

Credits and Synopsis

Producer
Adam Folk
Screenplay
Chris Zois
Abel Ferrara
Director of Photography
Ken Kelsch
Editor
Anthony Redman
Production Designer
Graham Wichman
Sound
Neil Benezra
Costume Designer
Ciera Wells

©June Project, LLC
Production Companies
Wild Bunch and Forbes present in association with Belladonna Productions

Executive Producers
Anthony Gudas
Michael Corso

CAST
Gérard Depardieu
Mr Devereaux
Jacqueline Bisset
Simone Devereaux
Marie Mouté
Sophie Devereaux
Pamela Afesi
Chambermaid
Nikki James
Judge
Paul Calderon
Pierre
Paul Hipp
Guy
Shanyn Leigh
French journalist
Amy Ferguson
Renée

In Colour [1.78:1]

Distributor
Altitude Film Distribution

Georges Devereaux, a big shot in international banking, is a sex addict who brings expensive prostitutes into his business meetings. He arrives in New York and checks into the Carlton Hotel, where he orgies with a group of swingers and then entertains two Russian hookers overnight. Next morning he sexually assaults the room maid when she catches him in the bathroom, then has lunch with his daughter Sophie and her Canadian boyfriend, asking them about their sex life. The maid later files a complaint, and Devereaux is taken off a flight at JFK airport and held for questioning. During a fundraising dinner for Israel in Paris, his wife Simone is told about his arrest; she rushes to New York to arrange his bail and defence. On bail, Devereaux has sex with an American law student and tries to rape a French journalist. Simone engineers the withdrawal of the charge of raping the maid, apparently by paying off certain high-placed individuals. Devereaux exults in his 'victory' and reflects that he has no wish to change.

What If

Canada/Ireland 2013
Director: Michael Dowse
Certificate 15 101m 31s

Reviewed by Sophie Mayer

What If... is a picture postcard of a film, with all the surface beauty and lack of space for actual content beyond the 'wish you were here' that this implies. Sporadically comedic, inoffensively romantic (as long as you're straight and white), it is less a film than a series of gifs guaranteed to go viral. All the hipster memes are present: magnetic-poetry meet-cute; Southern 'dirty' food obsession; Adam Driver being a loveable asshole; Daniel Radcliffe naked; and a Manic Pixie Dream Girl who's self-aware about what a MPDG is. Chantry is played by Zoe Kazan, after all, who skewered the Sensitive New Man romcom and its imaginary women in her screenplay for *Ruby Sparks* (2012).

Screenwriter Elan Mastai, adapting T.J. Dawe and Michael Rinaldi's play, has at least attempted to give Chantry friends, motivation, a career and even an inner life, albeit symbolised by a manga-eyed winged 2D animation that floats around aimlessly crying a single tear. And, *contra* the Apatow/Dunham axis, there is a suggestion here that men and women may be able to have a relationship based on something other than sex. On the other hand, there's never a moment's doubt that Chantry's friendship with Wallace (Radcliffe) will follow the *When Harry (Potter) Met Sally* script, set piece by set piece, all the way to true love. But it offers irony as a mislead, as Wallace protests, after his and Chantry's second meet-cute at a screening of *The Princess Bride*, that love is a cinematic fairytale. The citation points to the film's desire to have its deep-fried Elvis cake and eat it, to deconstruct a genre but still secure audience investment in its emotional core.

Its queasy jokes about incest, faeces and killing homeless people tries to assure us that this is not your mum's afternoon weepie. But, as with the deprecatory wit of Wallace's best-man speech at his (only) friend Allan's wedding, the humour is merely a cue for the 'but seriously' moment. As Wallace says in his speech, so the film preaches: love is hard. Serious moments, such as a late-night conversation that reveals

Daniel Radcliffe, Zoe Kazan

Chantry's mother's death and Wallace's parents' divorce, are thrown away, mere chess moves towards the inevitable final kiss rather than opportunities to do the tough work of love.

It's a point that was made with far more style by Sarah Polley's *Take This Waltz* (2011), a deeply flawed film whose ambition and complexity become apparent by comparison with *What If...* which tellingly revisits both Toronto's middle-class arts milieu and significant locations from Polley's film. But where Margot's job for Canadian Heritage raised questions about our investment in places and their narratives, *What If...* is literally a postcard, repaying its national funding from Telefilm Canada and the Irish Film Board with a series of glamorous locations in Toronto and Dublin.

The end credits do in fact narrate Wallace and Chantry's romance entirely through postcards, as they traipse off to work in Taiwan and volunteer in India before returning to Toronto to get married. Heteronormative bonding dovetails with first-world globalisation, and witness the wish-fulfilment: love means that Wallace, who can't afford rent, can fund a return ticket to Dublin at a day's notice, and study medicine in Taipei without learning Mandarin or applying for a visa. Isn't love magic? Wallace is right: it's a two-dimensional fairytale. S

Credits and Synopsis

Produced by
David Gross
Macdara Kelleher
André Rouleau
Written by
Elan Mastai
Based on the play *Toothpaste and Cigars* by T.J. Dawe, Michael Rinaldi
Director of Photography
Rogier Stoffers
Editor
Yvann Thibaudeau
Production Designer
Ethan Tobman
Music
AC Newman

Sound Recordist
Brian Newby
Costume Designer
Lea Carlson

©F Word Productions Inc., PCF F-Word The Movie Inc. and Kelcom Limited t/a Fastnet Films
Production Companies
Produced in association with Téléfilm Canada
A film by Michael Dowse
A No Trace Camping, Fastnet Films, Caramel Films production
Produced with the participation of Ontario Media Development Corporation, Bord Scannán na hÉireann/The Irish Film Board
Produced with the financial participation of SODEC Société de développement des entreprises culturelles - Québec
An Entertainment One presentation
Produced with the support of investment incentives for the Irish film industry provided by the Government of Ireland
Produced with the participation of Technicolor Canada, Inc.
Produced in association with Movie Central
Executive Producers
Jesse Shapira
Jeff Arkuss
Hartley Gorenstein
Michael Dowse
Patrice Theroux
Bryan Gliserman
Mark Costa
Ford Oelman

CAST
Daniel Radcliffe
Wallace
Zoe Kazan
Chantry
Megan Park
Dalia
Adam Driver
Allan
Mackenzie Davis
Nicole
Rebecca Northan
Holly
Jemima Rooper
Ellie
Rafe Spall
Ben
Megan Park
Dalia
Lucius Hoyos
Felix
Tommie-Amber Pirie
Gretchen
Meghan Heffern
Tabby
Jonathan Cherry
Josh

Dolby Digital
In Colour [2.35:1]

Distributor
E1 Films

Toronto, the present. Medical-school dropout Wallace ends a year of moping over his ex-girlfriend by attending a party at his friend Allan's, where he meets Allan's cousin Chantry, while Allan hooks up with Nicole. Both women are already in relationships but Nicole leaves her boyfriend for Allan, while Wallace becomes friends with Chantry and her boyfriend Ben (whom he accidentally knocks out of a window), even though he is attracted to her. When Ben travels to Dublin for work, Chantry and Wallace become close, attending Nicole and Allan's wedding, skinny-dipping and confessing their secrets. When Wallace follows Chantry to Dublin to confess his attraction, both Ben and Chantry are unimpressed. Chantry accepts a promotion that will mean moving to Taipei, even as she realises the attraction is mutual. At her leaving party, Chantry and Wallace finally kiss. The end credits show their wedding.

DIGITAL EDITION AVAILABLE ON iOS AND ANDROID

SUBSCRIBE!

DIGITAL EDITION

- Only £30 for an annual subscription
- Includes a two-year archive of back issues
- Interactive elements including text-search, video, bookmarks and clippings

THE ARCHIVE

- Every issue of Sight & Sound and Monthly Film Bulletin – stretching back 80-plus years – with over 40,000 pages to explore
- Available to subscribers only for a £20 annual fee*
- Desktop-PC access only

PRINT EDITION

- Save money – get two issues FREE!**
- Includes a FREE digital edition
- Pay by Direct Debit (UK) for a FREE BFI DVD
- Only £45 (UK) or £68 (Overseas) for a 12-month subscription
- Delivered straight to your door

BACK ISSUES AND BINDERS STILL AVAILABLE

FOR MORE INFORMATION AND TO SUBSCRIBE:

Visit: bfi.org.uk/sightandsound/subscribe
Email: sightandsound@abacusemedia.com
Telephone: +44 (0)20 8955 7070
Demo: sightandsounddigital.bfi.org.uk

Available on Available on the App Store · Google play · Available on kindle fire

ILLUSTRATION BY ANDY SMITH

*Individual, paid, private subscriptions only – not for library or institutional access **12-month UK print sub vs. cover price

Home cinema

Teen spirit: Patricia Gozzi as Agnès, with Gunnel Lindblom as the family housekeeper, in *Rapture*

GIRL TO THE FRONT

John Guillermin's rites-of-passage movie *Rapture* is a remarkable rediscovery – with a mesmerising performance from its young lead

RAPTURE

John Guillermin; USA/France 1965; Eureka/Masters of Cinema/Region B Blu-ray and Region 2 DVD Dual Format; Certificate 12; 105 minutes; 2.35:1; Features: commentary with film historians Julie Kirgo and Nick Redman, booklet

Reviewed by Trevor Johnston

It's not something you're likely to see bandied about on the cover of any self-respecting arthouse release – "From the director of *The Towering Inferno* and *Death on the Nile*". The name may not exactly be a selling point, but John Guillermin remains one of a remarkably able coterie of British filmmakers, including J. Lee Thompson and Guy Green, who honed their craft in that fascinating period of cultural transition between the Suez crisis and the arrival of The Beatles. When Britain's cottage film industry morphed into an international production arm of the Hollywood studios, Guillermin wasn't alone in eschewing modest homegrown crime and adventure stories for larger-scale US studio projects, such as 1966's WWI aerial epic *The Blue Max* and the caustic WWII reconstruction *The Bridge at Remagen* three years later. Going Hollywood in such a major way, however, with later undertakings including the 1976 Rick Baker-meets-the-Twin Towers version of *King Kong*, effectively put the kibosh on any sort of critical interest in Guillermin's career, understandable perhaps in the case of his blockbuster years but not altogether justified given the intermittently striking achievements of his British period.

Where the reputation of his colleague J. Lee Thompson, for instance, has survived a raft of grim latterday Charles Bronson flicks thanks to the lasting impact of his 1962 Scorsese-approved thriller *Cape Fear*, Guillermin's filmography has lacked a similar attention-getting accomplishment. Until, that is, this welcome Masters of Cinema release for *Rapture*, a startling French-shot rites-of-passage story whose sensitive and visually expressive treatment of a troubled protagonist on the cusp of womanhood represents an anomaly among Guillermin's otherwise reliably masculine choice of material. You've only to look either side of *Rapture* to understand the complete departure the then 40-year-old Cambridge-educated Anglo-French former RAF bomber pilot took with this hard-to-classify saga of isolated youth on the Channel coast. Before it, there's *Guns at Batasi*, a slightly theatrical but effectively pained look at the prospect of African colonial handover from the perspective of the soldiers on the ground (including an outstanding Richard Attenborough); next up, Guillermin tackled the somewhat broader canvas of *The Blue Max*, still much prized by plane nuts for its brilliantly mounted battle sequences deploying reconstructed vintage biplanes.

In the case of *Rapture*, however, it's the unusual subject matter and eclectic cast that provide the main talking points, alongside Guillermin's strikingly freestyle direction, which often proves more *nouvelle vague* than the *nouvelle vague*. Melvyn Douglas's stern paterfamilias and Dean Stockwell's almost angelic escaped prisoner provide the merest semblance of US marquee value, while Ingmar Bergman regular Gunnel Lindblom makes a strong impression as the windswept Brittany household's kindly if rather blowzy housekeeper. (The presence of a young Peter Sallis in a bit part actually makes *Rapture* the missing cinematic link between

Fifteen-year-old Patricia Gozzi gives one of the most uninhibited, heartbreaking portrayals of adolescent emotions

Ninotchka, *The Virgin Spring* and *Wallace & Gromit*!) But outshining everyone else in the cast is the 15-year-old Patricia Gozzi, the French child star of sleeper Gallic hit *Sundays and Cybele* (1962), whose role as the lonely girl doubting her own sanity when overwhelmed by first love facilitates one of the most uninhibited, heartbreaking portrayals of topsy-turvy adolescent emotions we'll ever be privileged to share.

Everything matters so, so much to Gozzi's central character Agnès. She's crushed when distant, obviously troubled dad Douglas throws her favourite doll into the sea; she battles ferociously against his scepticism to create a rather dashing scarecrow (clad for maximum Oedipal impact in pater's old wedding suit), suggesting the transformation of childhood things into a focus for romantic yearning; then she's sent for a sudden hormonal loop by the unexpected entrance of dashing fugitive Stockwell. Seared by the traumatic mood swings of attraction and jealousy, Gozzi puts so much of herself on screen you almost worry for her, but the film's never content to act as a passive showcase for this standout performance. Instead, Guillermin's inspired direction finds its own visual correlate for her wayward career from ecstasy to despair, weighing in with a whole battery of whirling camera moves, low and high angles and even striking aerial coverage. In other circumstances, all this might seem mere empty display, yet instead we take from it a genuine sense of expressive empathy, the combination of whip-pans, skewed angles and deliberately jarring edits, for instance, allowing us to share Gozzi's feelings of dizzying panic on city streets when the story takes her far from the comfort zone of hearth and home.

Guillermin always seems to have relished a certain freedom with the camera – perhaps why he was at home with the swooping, soaring confrontations of *The Blue Max* – and even his earlier British offerings (notably the camera's participation in the rough-and-tumble fight scenes in his 1960 Richard Todd thriller *Never Let Go*) show more kinetic chutzpah than more reserved compatriots such as Basil Dearden.

We'll never know whether it was producer Darryl F. Zanuck's backing on *Rapture* (which was made during the Francophile former Fox studio chief's 60s sojourn in Europe as an independent operator) that encouraged Guillermin to go for broke in the way he does here, or the one-off collaboration with French cameraman Marcel Grignon, whose gorgeous, richly textured black-and-white CinemaScope lensing comes across in pristine condition thanks to this splendid HD transfer. Still, had it been shot in French and billed as "Un film de Jean Guillermin", it's easy to imagine it being regarded now as another treasure of the French New Wave. Positively confounding then to learn from Nick Redman and Julie Kirgo's commentary that *Rapture* was barely released in 1965 and has taken almost 50 years to emerge in this first official UK home-video incarnation. Its release, finally, is much to the satisfaction of the octogenarian Guillermin, still with us and long resident in LA, who

Gozzi with co-star Dean Stockwell

contacted Redman by phone to try to prompt some sort of exposure for the film he professes his personal favourite from a lengthy career.

The disc commentary does a worthwhile job of cheerleading for the fairytale elements underpinning *Rapture*'s unusual subject matter, suggesting that the child who builds the scarecrow somehow wills it into life, thence conjuring up love-interest Stockwell and setting in motion a whole new learning curve. Disappointingly, however, Redman and Kirgo don't seem to have engaged with Guillermin's earlier British output in any depth. While they nod to the high esteem in which the franchise's fans hold 1959's *Tarzan's Greatest Adventure*, they miss the opportunity to flag up deft department-store ensemble *The Crowded Day* (1954, happily available on a BFI Blu-ray), the bracing 1956 John Mills policier *Town on Trial* and the way *Never Let Go* turns Richard Todd's heroic *Dam Busters* persona upside down as a put-upon salesman whose car is stolen, sending his 'never had it so good' life of consumer-driven materialism spiralling into a vortex of masculine anxiety and mounting hire-purchase debts.

Why and how did something of this quality essentially disappear from view for almost 50 years?

Still, while the best of Guillermin's previous offerings, like so much of the undervalued bread-and-butter British cinema of the Suez-to-Beatles years, derives its potency and ongoing fascination from the way it reflects the social and cultural upheavals of the day, *Rapture* remains something else again, a distinctive outlier in the oeuvre, a road never to be travelled again. Why and how did something of this quality essentially disappear from view for almost 50 years? Well, it's hard to disagree with Redman and Kirgo's supposition that the age-gap involved in Gozzi and Stockwell's relationship was something that distributors 20th Century Fox were not wholly comfortable with. After all, she's 15, he's nearly 30, and while the film admirably refuses to adopt an exploitative approach, there can't help but remain a lingering unease over the appropriateness of their relationship. That said, Guillermin commits without reservation to the emotional reality of this young girl's experience, and the combination of Gozzi's wholly authentic presence, a respectful *mise en scène* and Stockwell's gallant supporting turn allows events to unfold as a sort of innocent idyll with an insistent undertow of foreboding. Every bittersweet nuance is captured in a wonderful Georges Delerue score pitched halfway between the keening romantic anguish of *Le Mépris* and the baroque-influenced uplift of *Day for Night*.

Given the many ways in which *Rapture* is remarkable, it stands as quite a discovery, and while one seriously doubts there are many more like this lurking in the shadows of Guillermin's filmography, perhaps it will prompt a resurgence of interest in an erratic but worthwhile British talent. One can only hope that the same degree of care might yet be lavished on the highlight of Guillermin's earlier British output, where *Never Let Go* stands as one of the definitive films of the Macmillan era.

Melvyn Douglas, as Agnès's stern father, with Sylvia Kay

New releases

BIRDS, ORPHANS AND FOOLS

Juraj Jakubisko; Czechoslovakia 1969; Second Run/ Region 2 DVD; 78 minutes; 1.66:1; Features: booklet

Reviewed by Charlie Fox

A haunted carnival from Prague that's seemingly dreamed up as it drifts on, Juraj Jakubisko's *Birds, Orphans and Fools* is a still intoxicating bolt of New Wave energy. It was suppressed soon after its release by the communist authorities, who feared that it might conjure up forbidden ghosts and countercultural fervour with the wicked verve of some lost Marx Brothers adventure.

The orphans of the title are a trio of mad youths who break out of their asylum – the world beyond is exactly the same – and run amok in a *Jules et Jim*-like erotic triangle caused more by a collective joy in carnal experiment than by any romantic infatuation. Suffused with a low-key version of Czech surrealism, it's closer to Werner Herzog's *Even Dwarfs Started Small* (1970) than anything else, a chaotic mesh of dream logic and playful subversion accomplished with a feel of documentary riskiness. Bewildering textural changes are readily subsumed into its anarchic operation, which shifts whimsically through psychedelic reveries, re-enactments of wartime trauma, a medieval *danse macabre* and road-movie antics involving a gang of wild-eyed children. The delirium peaks with a waltz on a frozen lake followed by a happy conflagration and cavorting in the snowy wilderness before one of the orphans roars like a lion.

The whole riot is kept alive by its own manic exhilaration until its sucker-punch finale set inside a derelict fairground – a potent symbol for the decay of revolutionary hopes. Indeed, the bombed-out buildings and corpses scattered in the streets let us know that Czechoslovakia is reeling from 1968's Soviet assault. The immediate presence of this political phantom remains unspoken, alluded to, perhaps, if you take madness as a metaphor for the regime itself; but the insanity here feels closer to some crazed Cheshire Cat act of resistance against the state's dominant logic. This ultra-60s belief in mischief and madness as radical instruments, capable of fatally shocking the mind of your oppressor, is everywhere, expressed with devilish exuberance, yet the film knows in its lunatic heart that all its dreams are doomed: "Why is the world so sad?"

Disc: Luscious restored print; the accompanying booklet includes a substantial essay by Czech film scholar Peter Hames.

FAUST

F.W. Murnau; Germany 1926; Eureka/Masters of Cinema/ Region B Blu-ray and Region 2 DVD Dual Format; 107 minutes; 1.33:1; Features: alternative export cut, comparison between the two versions, two alternative music tracks, commentary by David Ehrenstein and Bill Krohn, introduction by Tony Rayns, booklet

Reviewed by Philip Kemp

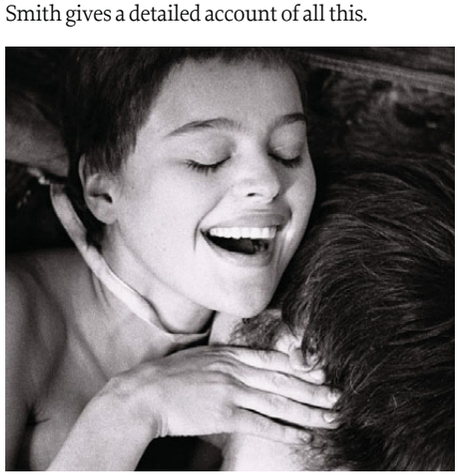
Faust, Murnau's final German movie before he left to greet the *Sunrise* in Hollywood, has long divided critics like no other of his films. A grand, indeed often grandiose reworking of the classic German legend, drawing on Marlowe, Goethe and (less advisedly) Gounod, it was hailed by Herman G. Weinberg as "a great fresco painted with lights and shadows... Never before or since was there... such an exultant flight of the cinema spirit." In their largely uncritical commentary accompanying this Eureka set, David Ehrenstein and Bill Krohn approvingly quote Weinberg. They have less time for C.A. Lejeune ("all the tinsel and bombast of a world-circus") or for Siegfried Kracauer: "The metaphysical conflict between good and evil was thoroughly vulgarised."

Much of the film finds Murnau's pictorial genius at its height: in the misty, Rembrandtesque scenes in Faust's study, darkness swirling ominously at the imminence of the fatal pact; the spreading out of Mephisto's cloak into a monstrous black cloud engulfing the little German town, pestilence and death leaching from its folds; Faust's aerial journey, borne up on that same cloak over intricately modelled rooftops, rivers, mountains and plains; the nocturnal duel between Faust and Marguerite's brother Valentin, shadows weaving and lunging across the little medieval square.

But at other times the film lurches into kitsch, as in the sentimentalised love scenes between Faust and Marguerite, the lumbering would-be comic flirtation between Mephisto and Marguerite's aunt Marthe, and the Duchess of Parma's marriage feast, which Georges Sadoul likened to a 1920s German music hall.

The casting doesn't help. Camilla Horn (in a role initially offered to Lillian Gish) makes an insipid Marguerite, matched by the wan Faust (as a young man) of Swedish actor Gösta Ekman. Future director Wilhelm Dieterle hams it up energetically as Valentin, but he's utterly eclipsed by the Mephisto of Emil Jannings, grinning and grimacing at his most corpulently histrionic.

Disc: Valuably, Eureka supplies both the domestic or primary version of the film and the export version (they would have been shot simultaneously with two cameras), plus a detailed comparison of the two. It's the export version that has long been the only one available, but now we can see how different (and generally better) the domestic version was: better angles, superior takes, sharper cutting – and in one scene a real bear where the export used a man in a bear suit. In the booklet, R. Dixon Smith gives a detailed account of all this.



Crazy hearts: *Birds, Orphans and Fools*

FIVE GOLDEN DRAGONS

Jeremy Summers; UK 1967; Network/Region 2 DVD; 101 minutes; 2.35:1; Features: BECTU audio interview with Jeremy Summers, original theatrical trailer, image gallery, promotional material PDF

Reviewed by Vic Pratt

Five Golden Dragons ought to be better than it is. Based on an Edgar Wallace story and glossily shot in sunny, swingin' 1967 Hong Kong by prolific director Jeremy Summers, this pulpy tale of international intrigue boasts an enviable cast. The titular Golden Dragons, members of a secret syndicate controlling the gold market, are, as the trailer roars, "each played by a great International star!" And sure enough, Dan Duryea, George Raft, Christopher Lee and Brian Donlevy are all present and correct, adopting megalomaniacal scowls and the silky oriental robes so beloved of international master criminals. Klaus Kinski is also on board, playing – you guessed it – a chain-smoking psychotic killer, wearing a dapper bow tie, no less, while various glamorous ladies, including sultry Margaret Lee, slink around in revealing attire. Producer Harry Alan Towers, who wrote the screenplay, was an old hand at international exploitation. So, all things considered, there should be no shortage of sensational 60s-style fun and thrills here.

Yet fun and thrills are in short supply in this disappointingly dull and underwhelming film. One problem is drama-dissolving leading man Robert Cummings. Awfully miscast as an international playboy of some sort, he's far too old for the starlets who seem to find him irresistible. What's worse, a cumbersome script forces him to play it for laughs, like an aged, low-rent cross between Bob Hope and Jerry Lewis. Looking hot and weary throughout, he spends the film mopping his forehead, breathlessly chewing gum and delivering lacklustre wisecracks. Rather than finding myself gripped by the twists and turns of the drama, I found myself worrying that if Bob wasn't careful, he'd do himself a mischief.

The scenery is nice but the narrative moves with interminable slowness. Even the obligatory backstreet chase scenes seem leisurely. Hunter and prey jog gently along in their respective rickshaws, almost like tourists on a sightseeing jaunt. Nor are things enlivened by the great International stars themselves, who politely deliver daft dialogue about their not-very-secret society with the detached air of proud men doing a slightly demeaning duty and already looking forward to losing the dumb robes and getting on with pre-dinner cocktails in the hotel bar.

In the lengthy audio interview accompanying this release, Summers recollects with a twinkle the roguish Towers, for whom he made a clutch of movies. He remembers attending a business meeting where Towers let the telephone ring for hours – never answering, for fear that a creditor might be on the line – and recalls the features they worked on together. Yet he doesn't mention *Five Golden Dragons*. It's almost as if he's forgotten it. And, if so, no wonder: there are various other more memorable films to look back on in Summers's estimable back-catalogue.

Disc: The 2001 BECTU audio interview is accompanied by an image gallery and promotional material PDFs.

ANOTHER SLICE OF CHERRY PIE

This comprehensive collection may not solve any mysteries – but it's an undoubted treat for *Twin Peaks* devotees

TWIN PEAKS – THE ENTIRE MYSTERY

TWIN PEAKS PILOT/TWIN PEAKS SERIES 1 & 2/TWIN PEAKS: FIRE WALK WITH ME

David Lynch et al; USA 1990-92; Paramount Home Entertainment/Region-free Blu-ray; Certificate 15; 1,637 minutes; Features: cast and crew interviews, featurettes, 'Log Lady' introductions, more than 90 minutes' previously unseen footage from 'Fire Walk with Me'

Reviewed by Kim Newman

Discs nine and ten of the *Twin Peaks: The Entire Mystery* Blu-ray box-set revisit the TV series' much maligned 1992 film spinoff. *Twin Peaks: Fire Walk with Me* defied fans' expectations by not picking up from the Season Two cliffhanger, in which FBI agent Dale Cooper (Kyle MacLachlan) was possessed by the demonic Bob (Frank Silva). Instead, it loops into the show's backstory with the investigation of an earlier case related to the murder of Laura Palmer (Sheryl Lee), then draws on Jennifer Lynch's tie-in novel *The Secret Diary of Laura Palmer* to give a harrowing account of the week before Laura's death, the inciting incident of the series. Ever since the film's release, it's been known that Lynch shot much more footage than he used (including scenes with regular characters who didn't make the final cut) but successive home-video, laserdisc and DVD releases have failed to do more than hint at what was missing.

Now Lynch has revisited the material and put together 90 minutes of deleted or extended scenes, and filmed an odd coda interviewing actors Ray Wise, Grace Zabriskie and Sheryl Lee in character as the Palmer family, and asking how they are doing in the present day (two of them, of course, are dead but still give reassuring responses). From the beginning, *Twin Peaks* has been a mystery – or interlocking set of mystery boxes – that has offered only partial solutions: the TV series and the film give subtly different answers to the key question of who killed Laura Palmer. For all that the extra material is billed as "the missing pieces", further mystification is on offer.

When Agent Desmond (Chris Isaak) tells forensics man Sam Stanley (Kiefer Sutherland) that it's time to watch the sunrise at the Fat Trout Trailer Park, Stanley asks, "Are you speaking to me in code?" only to be told "No, Sam, I'm speaking plainly. I mean exactly what I said." Yes, well, maybe. Lynch loves to deadpan, and often withholds keys that would enable viewers definitively to interpret events, images and lines that might just as well be non sequiturs. Even Lynch now feels that *Fire Walk with Me* didn't find an audience initially because it lacked the humour of the TV show ("They don't always rush out to get tickets for incest and murder"). The deleted material includes

Family secrets: Grace Zabriskie, Sheryl Lee and Ray Wise in *Twin Peaks: Fire Walk with Me*

lighter moments and snippets with charming, fondly remembered faces: Leland Palmer (Wise) comically impersonates a fairytale giant (not so funny in retrospect) and teaches his wife and daughter phrases in Norwegian in the family's sole happy moment in the whole saga; lumberman Pete Martell (Jack Nance) and clueless mill heiress Jocelyn (Joan Chen) argue with an aged, insistent customer, who wants to know why a two-by-four doesn't exactly measure two by four. The police department of Twin Peaks – among the casualties of the finished film – demonstrate their skewed priorities in vignettes: Deputy Hawk (Michael Horse, the deadpan's deadpan) expresses sympathy for a smuggler who will be making a long journey through the woods on foot, while his boss, Sheriff Truman (Michael Ontkean), worries about how many men he'll need to catch the crook.

Otherwise, the darks of the film are shown to be darker. There's more of Agent Desmond's investigation in a much less friendly town than Twin Peaks, including a ritual fistfight with an obnoxious sheriff. Snippets are added to the mystifying role of unstuck-in-time FBI agent Phillip Jeffries (David Bowie) – including a painful teleportation to Buenos Aires. Laura's jittery dance towards doom is extended too,

For all that the extra material is billed as 'the missing pieces', further mystification is on offer

with emphasis on her drug use and somehow-terrifying smile, showcasing Lee's still astonishing, hard-to-watch performance. The real treats for hardcore Lynch devotees involve longer visits to the alternate dimension where the displaced or killed victims wind up, and a tantalising scene that directly follows the last shot of the TV series and finds the possessed Cooper trying to fool a suspicious Truman while his just-stabbed girlfriend Annie (Heather Graham) mutters ominous clues from a hospital bed. It doesn't really advance the story but it shows that Lynch did consider adding what might be a conventional sequel hook, in the vain hope that *Fire Walk with Me* would be successful enough to make way for another follow-up, which would presumably have pitted Bob-possessed Cooper against the Twin Peaks PD, with the departed Laura intervening on the side of the angels.

Even with all this new material, key threads are left dangling. The Horne family, central to the show, don't feature in the film or the recovered material (so no Sherilyn Fenn or Richard Beymer), and there are only tiny restored bits for regulars Russ Tamblyn, Mary Jo Deschanel, Don S. Davis, Everett McGill, Peggy Lipton, Wendy Robie and Kimmy Robertson. *Twin Peaks*, like much of Lynch's work, is about an America that is at once idealised and nightmarish. Liminal zones exist just beyond its forests, whether they be Canada, other dimensions or the afterlife. With these pieces available, more of the jigsaw is filled in, but the gaps remain – and it may be that this is exactly what Lynch wants.

GANGSTER NUMBER ONE

Derided at the time of its release, Suzuki Seijun's hitman *noir* now looks like a masterpiece from Japan's first postmodern filmmaker

BRANDED TO KILL

Suzuki Seijun; Japan 1967; Arrow Films/Region B Blu-ray and Region 2 DVD Dual Format; Certificate 18; 87 minutes; 2.35:1; Features: interview with Suzuki Seijun and Jo Shishido, 'Trapped in Lust' (1973), original trailers, booklet

Reviewed by Alexander Jacoby

Somewhat marginalised in his time, director Suzuki Seijun now seems a seminal figure. In Mark Schilling's words, his "aestheticised, absurdist worldview, in which the code of the tough guy devolves into choreographed grotesquerie, foretold the course of much of the popular culture over the next three decades, both in Japan and the west". A decade older than such uncompromising modernists as Oshima Nagisa and Yoshida Yoshishige, Suzuki (who is still alive, aged 91) nevertheless looks like Japan's first postmodern filmmaker. *Branded to Kill* (1967), a stylised story of a Tokyo hitman, is now widely seen as his masterpiece, though at the time its alleged incoherence got Suzuki sacked from his studio, Nikkatsu.

The film's stylistic brilliance is undoubted. Nagatsuka Kazue's high-contrast *noir*-ish cinematography looks ravishing on this Blu-ray transfer, and the varying visual textures of concrete, metal, glass and skin come across with dazzling impact, helping to make clear the precision of Suzuki's framing and the skill with which he places human figures in inhospitable environments. The clean, chic interiors of Tokyo apartments become locations as sinister and as charged with menace as the mean city streets and the desolate wastelands outside.

When Suzuki was sacked, the head of Nikkatsu, Hori Kyusaku, dismissed *Branded to Kill* as incomprehensible, and its implications indeed remain ambiguous. The central premise, as hitmen battle each other for the status of being 'Number One', invites allegorical interpretation, an invitation strengthened by Suzuki's claim to have made his protagonist a Japanese archetype – hence his fetish for rice. In 1967, when the film was released, Japan overtook West Germany as the world's second-biggest economy: it seemed not impossible that the country might ultimately itself be 'Number One'. Yet the frantic rush towards economic prosperity had left many alienated and uncertain of their place in the new, industrialised Japan. While Oshima's films challenged the assumptions of the era from a position of political conviction, Suzuki did so from a nihilistic point of view, stressing the unproductive absurdity of competition. But Suzuki also highlights the film's own absurdity through a blend of in-jokes, bizarre happenings and the playful recapitulation of generic motifs. It's this self-consciousness, above all, that makes *Branded to Kill* seem so strongly to anticipate the film culture of subsequent decades.

Extras on this new Arrow release include brief but engaging interviews with Suzuki and his star, Jo Shishido. The director defends himself against charges of incoherence, insisting that the action is "self-explanatory" and the story "straightforward". Nevertheless, his comments on the production of the film arguably shed some light on why it might *seem* incoherent: he admits that the various sections of the screenplay were written separately by different members of the writing team. Shishido pays warm tribute to his director, and offers the mildly surprising information that Suzuki patterned the erotic scenes in *Branded to Kill* on paintings by Degas.

Given the film's sexual content, which is fairly frank for a Japanese studio product of the time, it's perhaps less surprising that it spawned a loose pornographic remake, included as the most substantial extra in this box-set. *Trapped in Lust* (1973) was directed by Yamatoya Atsushi, one of the screenwriters on *Branded to Kill*. Ironically, given Suzuki's fate at Nikkatsu, this independently produced film was distributed by that studio. The film is likely to be new to most Western viewers and is an interesting curiosity. The drab 1970s colour is no match for the gleaming monochrome cinematography of the original, but it lends its own appropriately tawdry feel; Yamatoya uses locations evocatively, and intermittently reveals an eye for striking composition and effective contrasts of light and shade. Despite the limitations of the sex-film format, there are also hints of a political subtext regarding the American presence in post-war Japan.

Suzuki highlights the film's own absurdity through in-jokes and the playful recapitulation of generic motifs

Jasper Sharp provides an introductory essay for each of the two films. He explores the role in the production of *Trapped in Lust* of many of Suzuki's regular collaborators, and sets *Branded to Kill* in the context of Suzuki's own interrupted career, Nikkatsu's broader output as a studio, and trends in world cinema during the late 1960s. He usefully relates the film to existential crime films produced elsewhere in the world, such as John Boorman's *Point Blank* and Jean-Pierre Melville's *Le Samouraï*. And he rightly challenges the assumption that Suzuki's approach was unique, pointing to *A Colt Is My Passport* (1967), another hard-boiled Shishido vehicle directed by fellow Nikkatsu contract filmmaker Nomura Takashi, to suggest that many of Suzuki's stylistic trademarks actually overlapped with those of other directors at that studio. It's certainly true that many of the bizarre features of *Branded to Kill* are exaggerations of the conventions of the Nikkatsu action picture rather than radical departures. Both iconoclastic and representative, it remains a key film of its decade, as well as a harbinger of future developments. S

Top gun: Jo Shishido stars in *Branded to Kill*

New releases

FRAU IM MOND

Fritz Lang; Germany 1929; Eureka/Masters of Cinema/Region B Blu-ray/Region 2 DVD; 170 minutes; 1.33:1; Features: documentary, booklet

Reviewed by Philip Kemp

Frau im Mond (*Woman in the Moon*) was Fritz Lang's last silent film; the studio Ufa pressured him to add sound effects but he stubbornly refused. It's no masterpiece, though, being an awkward and overlong mishmash of SF, melodrama and boys'-own adventure. An elderly, eccentric scientist, Professor Manfeldt (Klaus Pohl), has spent years trying to prove that there are vast deposits of gold on the moon. His only supporter is Wolf Helius (Willy Fritsch), who is head of a company building the first moon rocket and who is distracted by unspoken passion for his assistant Friede (Gerda Maurus, Lang's mistress at the time), the fiancée of his chief engineer Hans Windegger (Gustav von Wangenheim). Added to the mix is a ruthless international cartel which covets the lunar gold and plans to hijack the expedition via sinister agent Walt Turner (Fritz Rasp)...

Chief point of interest is the rocket ship, designed according to sound scientific principles, though it takes nearly half the running time before we get there. Lang called in top rocket scientists of the time (including the 18-year-old Wernher von Braun) to help create the first 'scientific' science-fiction movie. He's also said to have invented the '10, 9, 8...' reverse countdown. So close to reality was the design that it later influenced work on the V2 rocket, and in 1937 the Nazi government suppressed further screenings on the grounds of national security.

The rocket's interior is impressive, all streamlined art deco and charmingly dated gadgets, but once we reach the moon, scientific accuracy heads off into outer space. The travellers find breathable atmosphere, water and an equable climate. About this point, the plot also goes seriously doolally, with some excruciating overacting – especially from von Wangenheim – although Rasp, looking suspiciously like Hitler minus the moustache, makes a deliciously slimy villain.

Disc: The Murnau Stiftung has achieved a visually impressive and near-complete reconstruction, adding seven minutes to Eureka's previous DVD release. Gabriele Jacobi's documentary draws parallels with the pioneering Apollo moon landing of 1969, and Michael Grost's booklet essay links *Frau im Mond* to themes in other Lang films.

Mad about the boy: *Harold and Maude*

HAROLD AND MAUDE

Hal Ashby; USA 1971; Eureka/Masters of Cinema/Region B Blu-ray; Certificate 15; 91 minutes; 1.85:1; Features: audio commentary, video discussion, booklet

Reviewed by Kate Stables

"Has all the fun and gaiety of a burning orphanage," was *Variety*'s encouraging verdict on Ashby's dark, deeply eccentric comedy, which died spectacularly on release before its rapid and enduring resurrection as an outsider's cult choice, cited by David O. Russell, Judd Apatow and Wes Anderson as a key influence.

The second film in Ashby's hot streak of memorable 70s dramas, this provocative mix of life-affirming mischief and gerontophilia is actually the last gasp of the hang-loose 60s, especially when set against *The Last Detail*'s topically bawdy, bitter cynicism. The film's meandering feel similarly belies its lean construction; Ashby won an Oscar for editing *In the Heat of the Night*, and his skill in layering long takes, montages and expressive dialectical editing (from daisies to pushing up daisies in one deft cut) brought it down seamlessly from a baggy three-hour first cut, according to producer Charles B. Mulvehill's affectionate commentary.

Bud Cort, that "ethereal child-corpse", as David Cairns's video overview dubs him, gives a performance of bug-eyed sensitivity as Harold, the funeral-obsessed emo *avant la lettre*. Yet it's Ruth Gordon's capering octogenarian Maude who gives the film momentum, propelling it on a stream of quirky misdemeanours and boho maxims that open Harold up like a sunflower. Their March-December affair, even with its love scene erased on Paramount's orders (YouTube preserves their full-throttle kissing in Pablo Ferro's 1971 trailer), was widely believed to have tanked the film. Mulvehill reports that the public found the idea of "a boy who wants to fuck his grandmother absolutely nauseating". Intriguingly, Cairns notes that the cross-generational romance inevitably shocks his students on first exposure. The "firm young body conjoining with withered flesh" that Harold's priest abominates still retains its peculiarly transgressive charge, it seems.

Disc: A first-rate transfer, with enough grain for credibility, and those damp, green Bay Area landscapes nicely rendered (it was a notoriously wet shoot). The Cat Stevens songs, which add considerably to the film's tender vibe, sound good and fresh. The commentary, although slightly awkwardly constructed from separate recordings with Mulvehill and Ashby's biographer Nick Dawson, is informative.

The Chris Marker Collection *Letter from Siberia* accommodates five or six films within its promised travelogue like an elaborate Russian doll

THE CHRIS MARKER COLLECTION

SUNDAY IN PEKING/LETTER FROM SIBERIA/ DESCRIPTION OF A STRUGGLE/THE SIXTH SIDE OF THE PENTAGON/THE EMBASSY/THEORY OF SETS/THREE VIDEO HAIKUS/BLUE HELMET/ E-CLIP-SE/THE CASE OF THE GRINNING CAT

France 1956-2004; Soda Pictures/Region B Blu-ray and Region 2 DVD Dual Format; 298 minutes; 1.33:1/4.3; Features: booklet with essays by Chris Darke and Roger Tailleur

Reviewed by Charlie Fox

These ten films don't, perhaps, add up to the compendium many of us have dreamt of in pursuit of works by Chris Marker, but this far more eccentric collection of early masterpieces, mythic rarities, interludes and experiments provides an unexpected account of his playful and enigmatic oeuvre.

Many of these works might be classified as luminous exempla of the essay film, but even those nearly half a century old frequently seem like expressions of some encyclopedic and chimerical future form that Marker figured

Television

COLIN'S SANDWICH

UK 1988-90; Simply Media/Region 2 DVD; Certificate 12; 360 minutes; 4:3

Reviewed by Robert Hanks

After Mel Smith's death a year ago, a vocal minority of his fans lamented the critical and popular neglect of *Colin's Sandwich*, a sitcom that relied on Smith's characteristic blend of the saturnine and the mercurial. Whether this release is taken as a tribute or a cash-in, it is a chance to see what the fuss was about.

Smith is Colin Watkins, an aspiring author stuck in the British Rail complaints department – in the late 1980s, the very definition of futility and degradation. Encouraged by his long-term girlfriend Jen (Louisa Rix, warm and subtle, hinting at what Sybil might have been like before Basil) he makes escape attempts, but every one is frustrated by a passive-aggressive boss, troglodytic colleagues, clinging friends, outrageous bad luck or, most of all, himself. His reactions include panic, repressed rage, getting drunk, outbursts of somewhat contrived sarcasm, and self-loathing, often expressed in a voiced-over internal monologue.

The programme was often compared, not least by Smith, to *Hancock*. But with Anthony Aloysius St John the main joke was a deluded sense of importance; Colin has the opposite problem – no delusions at all. This is also a problem for *Colin's Sandwich*, considered as comedy. Thomas Hardy wrote that, "If you look beneath the surface of any farce you see a tragedy; and, on the contrary, if you blind yourself to the deeper issues of a tragedy you see a farce." Paul Smith and Terry Kyan seem to have looked beneath Colin's surface but then gone ahead anyway and tried to write a farce, with the consequence that the gags often feel bolted on, an acknowledgement that viewers and BBC Light Entertainment expected Mel Smith to be funny.

If you can ignore the guffaws of an over-warmed-up studio audience, Smith's lapses into mugging and some crudely informative dialogue, you might be impressed by the flashes of realism in the portrayal of Colin's self-sabotaging neurosis – his insistence, when opportunity presents itself, that the timing isn't right or that to grasp it would be self-serving; his procrastination; his readiness to suffer any degree of boredom or humiliation rather than confront a crisis. And instead of freezing him in Fawlty-like impotence, the writers develop him. Over the course of the two series Colin becomes, in spite of himself, a published writer; his relationship with the more attractive and ambitious Jen, at first an implausible comic device, is explained then pushed into believable crisis. This is not the comic or dramatic feast its admirers claim but it is a hearty snack.

Disc: A reasonable transfer. No extras.

THE IRWIN ALLEN COLLECTION

VOYAGE TO THE BOTTOM OF THE SEA/ LAND OF THE GIANTS/THE TIME TUNNEL

USA 1964-70; Revelation Films/Region 2 DVD; Certificate PG; 155 hours; 4:3; Features: cast interviews, special-effects footage, pilot episodes original versions, home movies, stills galleries, 'Mad' magazine parodies

Reviewed by Robert Hanks

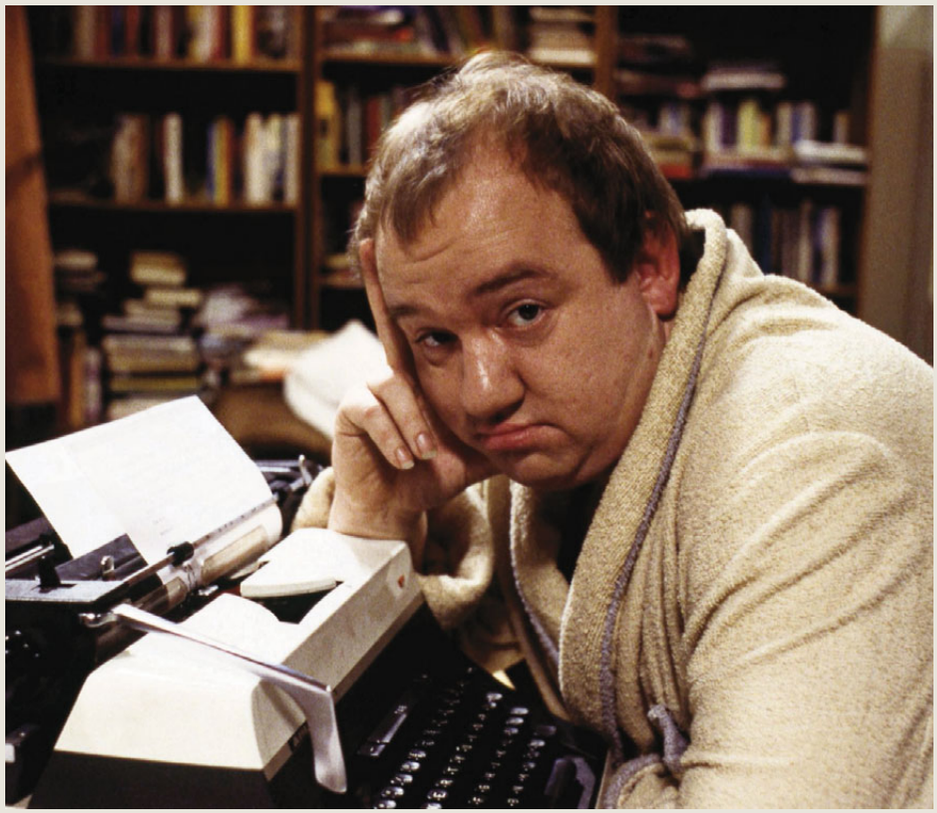
It is a moot point whether Irwin Allen's career belongs to the history of entertainment or of industrialisation. In the mid-1960s he was overseeing three major science-fiction TV series at once – *Lost in Space* (the only one not represented in this set), *Voyage to the Bottom of the Sea* and *The Time Tunnel*, each with 30 shows a season. Sheer Fordist zeal drove out artistic considerations such as originality and plausibility, especially towards the end of the decade. In an enjoyable interview accompanying the discs of *Voyage*, co-star David Hedison makes clear his contempt for the silliness of the plots and his terror of Allen (he still dislikes the smell of Aramis, Allen's favoured cologne), as well as his retrospective affection. With little time for second thoughts, Allen's preoccupations emerged: communists, saboteurs, giant things, man-beast hybrids, egg-bald villains. Another interview has Stefan Arngrim, the small boy in Allen's *Land of the Giants* (also included on this set) recalling an enormous model hand in which the actors were often entrapped – "Irwin loved that hand. That hand was very important to him... I don't think we want look too deeply into that."

Of the three series collected here, *The Time Tunnel* has worn least well: the premise of the show (scientists from top-secret 'Project Tic Toc' hurled randomly through time) is hobbled by reliance on stock footage and a rejection of paradox and the otherness of the past as sources of drama. But the Saul Bass-influenced titles, set to a jazzy score by 'Johnny' Williams, and the Piranesian sets for Operation Tic Toc, clearly derived from the underground complex of *Forbidden Planet*, are hugely stylish.

Voyage looks better. A super-advanced submarine, *Seaview* (the name is less Jules Verne than seaside retirement home), roams the seas on ill-defined scientific and troubleshooting missions. From this distance, the naval protocol, futuristic sets and assortment of aliens, villains, monsters and guest stars make it look like a dry run – wrong phrase, I know – for *Star Trek*, though its values are more Cold War than Civil Rights. Hedison and the underrated Richard Basehart are solid stars; and while the repetition and illogic of the plots eventually gets wearing, it has pleasingly Lovecraftian overtones (tentacles, fish-men, ancient dead cities), and some episodes – notably 'The Phantom Strikes' from season two, with Alfred Ryder as an enigmatic German U-boat ghost – are genuinely eerie.

Land of the Giants, in which a suborbital flight from Earth mysteriously ends up on a Brobdingnagian planet, is conceptually the weakest of the shows here, and the strain on budgets and writers' imaginations is visible. But it has plenty of arresting images – lovely Deanna Lund strapped down with giant Scotch tape, for instance – and a streak of sheer loopiness (the Pied Piper was really a magical intergalactic pest-control operative?).

Disc: Perfectly fine. The extras are not lavish but some of the cast interviews are surprisingly good fun. *Mad* parodies are less funny than you remember.



Colin's Sandwich There are flashes of realism in Colin's self-sabotaging neurosis, his readiness to suffer any humiliation rather than confront a crisis

New releases

out in solitude. Observed with a gaze as calm as that of his talismanic cat or owl, they're documentaries with the spooky density of science fiction, meditative and diaristic, shaped by a kind of critique that drifts in and out of reverie.

Spiralling back to *Sunday in Peking* (1956), the earliest work here, all these telltale emblems are in attendance. Marker's lusciously colourful tour of the Chinese capital is a curious mixture of enchanted postcard and dizzying semiotic experiment in the spirit of Roland Barthes's *Empire of Signs*. "Here," the narrator slyly tells us, "you expect to see Humphrey Bogart coming out of an opium den in a white suit." Marker compulsively catalogues the capital's customs and wonders, then contemplates "its past as distant as the concealed faces of the moon", before looking into its fantastical surface and deciding that he's within an imaginary city. Throughout his peripatetic wanderings, Marker is always haunting places that don't seem entirely real. Children gazing at an eclipse in Paris feel eerily reminiscent of the time-traveller staring at the "frozen sun" in *La Jetée*. (Echoes drift across decades and continents.) In a shimmering "video haiku", Paris obliquely returns, full of glowing birds. *Letter from Siberia* (1958) plays around in the lunar wilderness, accommodating five or six films within its promised travelogue like an elaborate Russian doll. It's as much formal game as it is report from a distant land. There are cartoon sequences, a lesson in manipulating newsreels to communist or capitalist ends, and a gleeful 'commercial' for reindeer voiced by an English minx.

It's traditional to linger over the nonpareil texts that weave around these images, but Marker's montages possess their own uncanny grace too, a daydream texture of lulls, ellipses and subliminal connections that captures the associative meander of memory itself and yet – look again! – appears meticulously choreographed, full of riddles and historical phantoms.

Maybe there are too many of Marker's later pieces, which seem like dated curios – the best, *Theory of Sets* (1991), is an eerie magic-lantern show seen through primitive software – and you might pine instead for his elegiac film-portraits of Simone Signoret or Kurosawa. But as a chronological assemblage of Marker's short films and ephemera, many of which were previously as elusive as the man himself, it's almost heroic: a whole world is here, mysteriously refracted through his mind.

Disc: The early films are restored to uncommon gorgeousness; elsewhere there are some scuzzy prints but nothing to fear, plus a sizeable booklet with fine essays.

THE ESSENTIAL JACQUES TATI BLU-RAY COLLECTION

France 1932-78; StudioCanal/Region B Blu-ray; 1.33:1/1.37:1/1.78:1; 962 minutes total; Features: six features plus four alternative versions, seven shorts, introductions, analyses, voiceover commentaries, TV programme, trailer, English subtitles, 48-page booklet

Reviewed by Philip Kemp

BFI Video's rights having lapsed, Tati's oeuvre has now been snapped up by StudioCanal. Its Blu-ray-only box-set includes the six features, of course, plus a seventh disc containing seven shorts – some of which were included as extras on the BFI's disc of *Jour de fête*. Those who already own the BFI discs may well rest content; but what will new purchasers gain?

All that jazz: *Too Late Blues*

Tati was an inveterate tinkerer with his own films, especially with the earlier features. Which is why this box-set in fact includes not six but ten feature-length films: three versions of *Jour de fête*, two of *Les vacances de M. Hulot* and two of *Mon oncle*, each with different running times, added or deleted scenes and modifications to the soundtrack. Indeed it could well have been 11, but the 1962 version of *Vacances* is missing – even though it's referred to in the extras.

Jour de fête (1949), Tati's first feature, hit colour problems. Initially shot in a new colour process called Thomsoncolor, it proved impossible to print. (Joint sabotage by Technicolor and Kodak is said to have been responsible.) Luckily, Tati's producer Fred Orain had shot a back-up black-and-white version just in case, and it was this that was released. Then in 1964 Tati released a version incorporating hand-tinted spot colour, and also shot additional scenes involving a visiting artist who's sketching the little town (Sainte-Sèvre-sur-Indre) where the action takes place. Finally, in 1995, after Tati's death, his daughter Sophie Tatischeff and François Ede managed to extract colour prints from the original negative, while eliminating the superfluous painter.

Tati's greatest hit, *Les vacances de M. Hulot* (1953), which was always planned in monochrome, ran 96 minutes on its initial release. Tati truncated some scenes and rerecorded the soundtrack for its 1962 rerelease, and again for the 1978 version, four years before his death. This final version runs 88 minutes. *Mon oncle* (1958) underwent an international makeover, emerging as *My Uncle*. For this, Tati chopped off some ten minutes and revoiced some (but not all) of the dialogue in English, often to awkward effect. (At one point Tati's character Monsieur Hulot is addressed as "Mister Hewlott".)

PlayTime (1967), the vastly ambitious magnum opus that all but sank Tati's career, originally had a running time of 153 minutes. After its disastrous initial release it was variously hacked down for different countries; in the US it ran 93 minutes and was shown in 35mm, ruining Tati's meticulous widescreen compositions. The currently available version, as included in this set, is 125 minutes; the cut 28 minutes are missing, probably lost.

It's almost a relief to find that *Trafic* (1971) and *Parade* (1974) exist only in single versions. Nonetheless they're palpably lesser works, lacking the brio of the earlier films and betraying a sense of weariness – although Jonathan Romney mounts a spirited defence of *Trafic* in his 15-minute interview, describing it as a study of "European confusion". But Romney's interview apart, extras on this set are largely the Stéphane Goudet show. Goudet, a contributor to *Positif*, has written on Tati and Keaton and contributed a couple of extras to the BFI's release of *PlayTime*. This time round he's on every disc, providing introductions, analyses and, on the disc of shorts, a Tati-esque monologue entitled *Les Leçons du Professeur Goudet*. It's diverting stuff, if never digging very deep. Voiceover commentaries are limited to a handful of individual scenes from *PlayTime*, split between Goudet and Jérôme Deschamps. One office scene, which Goudet claims "hasn't been seen since the original release, as it was cut shortly afterwards by Tati", was present in full on the BFI release. The *PlayTime* disc also adds a British ABC TV programme on the shooting of the film, 'Tativille', which went out in the *Tempo* slot.

The disc of shorts is a mixed bag. The standout is Tati's dry run for *Jour de fête*, *L'Ecole des facteurs* (1947). Four, while starring Tati, were directed by others: two crude early efforts, *On demande une brute* (1934) and *Gai dimanche* (1935); the slightly more sophisticated *Soigne ton gauche* (1936), René Clément's second outing as a director; and the frankly rather dull *Cours du soir* (1967), with Tati as a mime tutor. Plus two oddities: *Forza Bastia* (1978), celebrating a football match in Ajaccio, the last footage Tati ever shot, later completed by Sophie Tatischeff; and a short by Sophie herself, *Dégustation maison* (1978), set in an eccentric café in Sainte-Sèvre-sur-Indre, bringing the whole Tati cycle neatly full circle.

The StudioCanal set offers no marked advance over the BFI discs except in the case of *Jour de fête*, where the restored colour version benefits from slightly sharper definition.

TOO LATE BLUES

John Cassavetes; USA 1961; Eureka/Masters of Cinema/Region B Blu-ray and Region 2 DVD Dual Format; Certificate 12; 101 minutes; 16:9 (DVD anamorphic); Features: David Cairns introduction, booklet

Reviewed by Michael Brooke

In the years between *Shadows* (1959) and *Faces* (1968), John Cassavetes directed two films for major studios under conditions and technical specifications very different to those of his wholly independent work. But if *A Child Is Waiting* (1963) ultimately owed more to producer Stanley Kramer, *Too Late Blues* (1961) is closer to the real deal: plenty of familiar preoccupations quickly bob above the atypically polished 35mm surface.

It's not hard to divine plenty of autobiographical anguish underpinning the character of protagonist Ghost (Bobby Darin), a jazz musician torn between creative purism and selling out, and the ensemble acting set pieces capture a surprising amount of the authentically raw Cassavetes feel despite the necessarily pre-written screenplay and rigid shooting schedule. Most of

New releases

the supporting cast (including future Cassavetes regular Seymour Cassel) had already appeared in *Shadows*, and although Darin and Stella Stevens (as Ghost's inamorata Jess) were imposed by Paramount, Cassavetes coaxes remarkably effective performances out of them – particularly from Stevens, who was rarely stretched to quite this extent. Everett Chambers's thin-lipped agent Benny, not so much the third point of the triangle as the remote outlier, is also particularly well drawn.

On the downside, *Too Late Blues* tends more towards melodrama than Cassavetes's other films. An overtly expressionist shot through a sink plughole is memorable if jarring, and the scene in which Ghost finds his masculinity symbolically called into question after being caught up in a fight in front of Jess is dramatically effective but has a pre-calculated whiff about it. But the treatment of Ghost and his band could hardly be more convincing: 30 when he shot it and still groping for a truly personal style (the achievements of *Shadows* notwithstanding), Cassavetes was all too conscious of their hopes and fears.

Disc: A lovely transfer from a near-pristine print. The only on-disc extra is a useful contextualisation of the film by David Cairns (who's refreshingly honest about its faults), while the booklet essay by David Sterritt highlights the way that Cassavetes subtly managed to inject quite a bit of authentic black Americana into an ostensibly all-white drama. (Archive pieces include an interview with Stevens, a frozen-in-time 1961 *Film Quarterly* profile of Cassavetes, and the relevant extract from composer David Raksin's autobiography.)

I VINTI

Michelangelo Antonioni; Italy 1953; Rarovideo/Region-free Blu-ray; 114 minutes; 1.37:1; Features: uncut footage, new interviews with cast and producer, Antonioni's episode from the 1953 omnibus 'Love in the City', booklet essays

Reviewed by Michael Atkinson

The third of the five features Antonioni made before the breakthrough of *L'avventura* in 1960, *I vinti* is an oddity in this august filmography – a full-throated 'issue' film structured around the rather nervous and reactionary sense, common in the 50s everywhere, that the new post-war youth of the day were out-of-control menaces.

Thankfully, though it begins with a narrated rant that could've been dictated by a comic-book-banning clergyman in Kansas at the time, the movie quickly shapes up into a much more fascinating tissue of experience, bouncing between three different stories – set in France, Italy and the UK – in which rebel post-teens engage, often whimsically, in murder.

The French story simply follows a spoiled gaggle of sociopath youths plotting and executing a random assassination, while in Italy a desperate and unstable punk runs from a busted smuggling operation, kills a guard and then realises that his daydreamed future (with the beguiling Anna Maria Ferrero) has been destroyed. In Britain, a narcissistic worm of a would-be poet (Peter Reynolds) finds a body and tries to build himself into a celebrity as a result, by way of a newspaper reporter's largesse; soon we understand that he's the disaffected killer, oblivious to empathy or consequences.

The kids aren't all right: *I vinti*

The tripartite form of the film never grows repetitive (Antonioni was assisted by five screenwriters, including Suso Cecchi d'Amico), and the accumulated thrust makes it a *Goalie's Anxiety at the Penalty Kick* or *River's Edge* for the neorealist era. (Or, in the final segment, *A Short Film About Killing*.) Amusingly, all the characters seem robustly Italian whatever their location (the casts are native but dubbed), though at the same time one can easily glean subtextual critiques of the French (nihilist rabble) and the Brits (urbanely infatuated with 'muhduh') in the stories. The real interest here is Antonioni's flexing of his *mise en scène* quads, blasting off at the very beginning with a breathtaking two-and-a-half-minute travelling shot inside a family apartment and from there never settling for a camera set-up that doesn't echo the characters' inner tortures, matching the desolate landscapes they find themselves in with their inner wastelands.

In aggregate *I vinti* is a welcome freak, experimental in form if inquisitively old-fashioned in message, while providing us with another perambulating window on how the maestro began to re-understand the modern world.

Disc: Among the over-detailed extras typical of Rarovideo, the meta-doc segment from *Love in the City* – in which Antonioni gathers real survivors of suicide attempts to partially re-enact their stories, often in the places where they'd hoped to die – is rather astonishing, presaging Rouch, Marker and Kiarostami, and offering a microcosm of Antonioni's analysis of tragedy into abstraction.

ZULU

Cy Endfield; UK/USA 1964; Paramount/Region B Blu-ray; 133 minutes; 2.35:1; Features: commentary with Sheldon Hall and Robert Porter, 'The Making of Zulu', 'The Music of Zulu', 'Zulu: Remembering an Epic', trailer, subtitles

Reviewed by Patrick Fahy

A triumph for star and first-time producer Stanley Baker, *Zulu* is an accomplished war film, unusual in its emphasis on the dignity of both sides' warriors, and in its long-haul suspense (with no actual fighting for almost 90 minutes). An intelligent spectacle, it recounts the heroic defence of the Rorke's Drift mission station in Natal in 1879, when around a hundred British soldiers held their own against sustained attacks by 4,000 Zulu braves.

The film's epic feel is a considerable achievement, given that events take place effectively in one location over just two days. Director Cy Endfield pulls it off by first establishing that the Zulus are coming, then playing a waiting game as the army improvises its defences and a palpable sense of isolation builds, with bouts of quiet and stillness intensifying the unease. Pacifist outbursts from Jack Hawkins's unhelpful missionary, meanwhile, start poisoning the regiment's self-confidence.

If Baker's gallant central turn as the Royal Engineer Chard is outdone by newcomer Michael Caine (delivering a nice line in upper-class understatement), the standout is Nigel Green as Colour Sergeant Bourne, whose quiet authority masks a touching paternal streak (not least when reading the roll call to establish who remains alive). Superb widescreen photography captures the ably staged action and the country's vast splendour, while John Barry's judicious score enhances the excitement.

Like Powell and Pressburger's *Ill Met by Moonlight* (1957), *Zulu* is more interested in soldiery than in war, and it honours the Zulus' formidable prowess just as the Zulus ultimately deem their foe "fellow braves". Endfield keeps jingoism at bay with a downbeat cautiousness about empire (never condemning Chard's bridge-construction work, yet ending on his staking a Zulu shield in the ground, indicating whose land this is). There's subtle comment too in the incongruity of British uniforms dotting the parched landscape. Unlike the Zulus, entirely at home among the grassy peaks, the red-coated British look as out of place as telephone boxes.

Disc: The Blu-ray shows everything from the striking scenery to Caine's famous dental filling in vibrant detail, though the sound quality occasionally reveals its age. The informative extras were previously available on DVD.

Artificial Eye

artificial-eye.com

François Truffaut

Jules & Jim

A dazzling, boldly original tale of love, friendship and the vagaries of history that combines romance, comedy and tragedy in breathtaking, near-perfect dramatic harmony.

AVAILABLE NOW ON DVD & BLU-RAY

Shoot the Pianist

Charles Aznavour stars in Truffaut's whip-smart, scintillating second film - a combination of mischievous, tongue-in cheek homage to American noir and effervescent, inventive Nouvelle Vague.

AVAILABLE NOW ON DVD & BLU-RAY

The 400 Blows

A true landmark in French cinema. Raw, honest and intensely emotional, The 400 Blows captures youth in startlingly vivid detail and holds a mesmerising, unflinching mirror up to life itself.

AVAILABLE ON DVD & BLU-RAY 11 AUGUST

The Soft Skin

Wearing its Hitchcockian influences on its sleeve, The Soft Skin combines deft, suspenseful editing with beguiling, dreamlike imagery and vivid realism to depict an astonishing vision of masculinity in crisis.

AVAILABLE ON DVD & BLU-RAY 11 AUGUST

Order now at amazon.co.uk

Free Super-saver Delivery and Unlimited Free One-day Delivery with Amazon Prime are available. Terms and conditions apply. See www.amazon.co.uk for details.

Available to buy on DVD

JULY 14th

Pre-order now amazon.co.uk

matchbox films

Free Super Saver Delivery and Unlimited Free One-Day Delivery with Amazon Prime are available. Terms and Conditions apply. See Amazon.co.uk for details

Checking out: Ann Dvorak jettisoned Hollywood fame in favour of love, travel and a childlike enthusiasm for hobbies ranging from millinery to bacteriology

SILK FOR SCARFACE

ANN DVORAK

Hollywood's Forgotten Rebel

By Christina Rice, University Press of Kentucky, 384pp, $40, ISBN 9780813144269

Reviewed by Pamela Hutchinson

"I think I want things passionately, and when I get them, I lose all interest," muses Ann Dvorak as discontented society wife Vivian in *Three on a Match* (1932). Over the course of the film, Vivian proceeds to smash her gilded cage, abandoning her handsome husband, fancy house and cherubic child in pursuit of dangerously high times and low company. Christina Rice's smart and very enjoyable biography of the actress paints a picture of a similarly restless star, who jettisoned Hollywood fame in favour of love, travel and a childlike enthusiasm for hobbies (bacteriology, millinery, walnut farming).

"When I think back on my life," Dvorak admitted to her journal in 1977, "I am ashamed of myself. Collecting and reading my library – and growing plants and 'keeping in touch with the soil' – made me a tragically disinterested figure of an actress. Also getting married in too much of a hurry without really knowing the man. I threw my life and career out of the window." The question that haunts Rice's book is whether Dvorak was right to express this regret: was there an Oscar out there for the taking had she knuckled down and behaved herself, or was her life all the richer for wriggling out of the studios' grasp? The rock 'n' roll subtitle, 'Hollywood's Forgotten Rebel', suggests the latter.

Dvorak, as presented here, is a model of passionate self-determination. The daughter of silent-movie actress Anna Lehr, she appeared in films first as a child, under her mother's name. As a gawky teenager, she auditioned for the MGM chorus line in a frumpy skirt and no makeup, but refused to be dismissed. "Why don't you pick me?" she demanded. "I'm sincere. I work. I have ambition." She got her wish and spent a few years hoofing, impressively enough to be taken on as an assistant instructor in addition to her high-kicking duties. You can spot Dvorak in those early MGM musicals, rangy limbs and a killer smile. As Rice says, she "pops" out of the crowd, but she had her heart set on dramatic roles.

The big break that might have set Dvorak on course for glory was *Scarface* (1932) – and she landed that part in style. It was during a party at Howard Hawks's house that young Dvorak sidled up to George Raft "a little high" and asked him to dance. When he demurred, Dvorak smiled and began to slink slowly around him, in a revealing silk dress. The role of Cesca, the gangster hero's precocious little sister, was immediately hers, and the dancefloor tableau was transplanted into the script. When *Scarface* finally emerged from censorship hell, it made a star out of its leading

lady: youthfully impetuous, with heavy-lidded sex appeal and a tragic soul. The star had a new name too: she had been born Anna McKim, but Dvorak had appeared a few generations back in her Austrian heritage (and, despite her best efforts, all of LA pronounced it Da-vor-ak).

It's the 30s that Dvorak will be remembered for, especially the permissive pre-Code years: falling apart in *Three on a Match*; singing 'You Bother Me an Awful Lot' to James Cagney in *'G' Men* (1935); slurring 'Penthouse Serenade' in *The Strange Love of Molly Louvain* (1932). A cushy deal made by Howard Hughes with Warner Bros earned Dvorak a comfortable living too, but 'Hollywood's new Cinderella' was anything but grateful to be there. After a hasty marriage to older British actor Leslie Fenton, she walked out on Warner Bros for a year-long honeymoon in Europe.

On her return, she struggled to land the stellar roles she craved and continued to champ at the studio bit. She was suspended after a mystery illness, possibly TB, kept her from the set one day. Then she launched a lawsuit against the studio in 1936 and, although Warners won that battle, they eventually let her go. While Dvorak's rebellion against the studio system paid few dividends for her, she set a precedent and other stars followed her to the courts, notably Bette Davis and Cagney. With the liberty of a freelancer, Dvorak fled to Europe again, but this time for work rather than leisure. Fenton had enlisted in the Royal Navy, and Dvorak wanted to follow him. She had a typically busy and varied war, working as a reporter, ambulance driver and Land Girl ("a wartime farmerette"), as well as entertaining the troops.

Was there an Oscar out there for Dvorak had she knuckled down, or was her life all the richer for slipping the studios' grasp?

After the war, Dvorak and Fenton divorced, which she sold to the papers as an opportunity to – finally – concentrate on her career: "I lightened my hair, talked to an agent, threw out my chest and said, 'Here I come.'" Dvorak's postwar work had its moments (a musical turn as a heartsick saloon singer in the 1945 western *Abilene Town*, imperiousness itself in 1947's *The Private Affairs of Bel Ami*), but her career never soared again. Her next two husbands left her broke, bitter and boozy, and she grew semi-estranged from her mother. Nevertheless, Dvorak was never unoccupied: at one point she was working on a manuscript titled *Historical Digest*, an innovative 18-volume history of the world.

More of an eccentric, perhaps, than a true rebel, the Dvorak we meet in this book is a captivating character. That Rice has had access to private correspondence and previously unseen photographs makes this an unusually intimate Hollywood biography, too. There's no doubt that Dvorak was far more complex than the showgirls and molls Hollywood wanted her to play – and that she had far more interesting ambitions, and gifts, than studio starlets are expected to display.

THE AESTHETICS OF SHADOW

Lighting and Japanese Cinema

By Daisuke Miyao, Duke University Press, 400pp, $27.95, ISBN 9780822354222

JAPANESE CINEMA GOES GLOBAL

By Yoshiharu Tezuka, Columbia University Press, 216 pp, £17.50, ISBN 9789888083336

Reviewed by Jasper Sharp

No national film culture exists in isolation yet there's been a tendency for the distant observer of Japan's cinema to focus on its art rather than its industry (historically one of the world's largest), downplaying transnational influences such as technology, raw materials, capital and labour. Two recent books by Japanese authors do a remarkable job of illuminating these areas. Daisuke Miyao's *The Aesthetics of Shadow* charts the evolution of film lighting in pre-war Japan, related critical discourses, and attempts to define a Japanese aesthetic within a medium of overseas origin. *Japanese Cinema Goes Global*, by Yoshiharu Tezuka (an academic and former cameraman), addresses post-war redefinitions of the term 'Japanese cinema'. Ostensibly covering different topics, they make ideal companion pieces, detailing the inner workings of the industry through the testimony of producers, cameramen and other technicians and providing a welcome counterbalance to the predominant director-as-auteur approach of Western scholars.

Miyao's study begins with the attempts of the American-born Henry Kotani to introduce to Japan the lighting techniques he learned as a cinematographer at Paramount in the 1910s. These were ultimately frustrated by the demands of the Kabuki theatre owners where the films of his employer, Shochiku, were exhibited, and thus an audience-led aesthetic persisted in which "light was more or less a neutral element in *mise en scène* and the visibility of actors' faces was the most important thing".

Nevertheless, while flat lighting remained the general rule, revolutionary developments within Nikkatsu's action-driven *chanbara* films of the late 1920s brought more expressionistic flourishes, with the flash of a blade under moonlight one of many techniques for defining samurai outlaws' psychological states. Subsequent transformations are described in technological and cultural terms (both nationally and in terms of studio house styles), including the introduction of panchromatic film stock, Shochiku's nurturing of a female fanbase using portrait-style lighting in the 1930s, and the appropriation of documentary-style realism for 1940s war films.

International breakthrough: 1953's *Gate of Hell*

Miyao sometimes provides an overwhelming abundance of detail but the overall approach is revelatory, culminating in a chapter about Japan's most celebrated cinematographer, Miyagawa Kazuo (*Rashomon*, *Ugetsu Monogatari*), and his work's relation to a 'Japanese aesthetic' in the post-war climate in which Western audiences first became aware of the country's cinematic riches.

Tezuka begins where Miyao leaves off, with the positioning of films such as *Ugetsu Monogatari* and *Gate of Hell* (both 1953) at international film festivals cultivating a taste for an Eastern exoticism. Daiei was by far the most active of the studios in attempts to define a 'Japanese' cinema in global terms (albeit Western ones). It did this through collaborations with American and Asian film producers and, Tezuka argues, throwing back an image of Oriental 'to-be-looked-at-ness' to the Western gaze in its own films, in which cultural differences were accentuated.

Concepts of modernisation, cosmopolitanism, globalisation, self-orientalism and cultural imperialism are explored in a number of case studies: directors such as Nakahira Ko and Inoue Umetsugu working anonymously at Hong Kong's Shaw Brothers Studio in the 1960s; the 1980 co-production of the TV miniseries *Shogun* (its shoot "reminiscent of the Military Occupation", according to its Japanese line producer); the rise of Tokyo's mini-theatre arthouse circuit during the 1980s; and the forgotten subject of Japan's financing of Western auteur works by directors such as Derek Jarman, Neil Jordan and David Cronenberg in the 1990s.

Tezuka's history unfolds against a backdrop of increasingly porous national borders, with the declining studio system ceding to a global Hollywood in which, from the 1980s, Japanese capital played a substantial role. Not that local filmmakers benefited: the idea that the Tokyo-shot Hollywood remake of *The Grudge* (2004) represented a boost for the local industry is challenged with revelations that Japanese crews worked under harsher conditions and for less money than most domestic productions offered.

Tezuka's outlook for Japanese cinema's future is somewhat bleak, noting the diminution in the country's cultural and economic stature in Asia since the 1980s. With little financing available for smaller independent productions addressing local concerns, and a global ambition motivated by a drive towards 'cultural odourlessness', the terms 'national' and 'industry' seem increasingly outmoded for a country that has traditionally been presented as more than a little bit different.

BIRDS OF PARADISE

Costume as Cinematic Spectacle

Edited by Marketa Uhlirova, Koenig Books, 341pp, £43, ISBN 9783863352189

Reviewed by Nathalie Morris

Swirling fabrics, glittering diamonds, exotic plumage and gleaming strings of pearls are in abundance in this sumptuous look at costume as cinematic spectacle. Bringing together three moments in film history – early cinema, silent cinema of the 1910s and 20s and queer underground cinema of the 1940s-70s – the book explores cinema's ongoing fascination with costume through moments and movements in which dress is propelled to the foreground to take precedence over narrative and characterisation.

The book emerges from the Fashion in Film Festival in London (the book's editor, Marketa Uhlirova, is the festival director), but its focus, as the subtitle suggests, is on costume rather than fashion – although fashion certainly gets a good look in too. As Uhlirova notes, clothing is rarely presented as fashion in the first decade of film. Early chapters look at practices such as the serpentine dance, which was all the rage in the 1890s, and the early 'marvellous' cinema of filmmakers such as Georges Méliès and Albert Capellani, with its focus on visual opulence, elaborate costuming and *mise en scène*. Beautiful illustrations present the colours, forms and textures captured in these early films. Alongside the essays themselves, they demonstrate how film, as a medium of motion and light, is perfectly suited for representing the dynamic and enrapturing qualities of fabric, feathers and fur.

Although the book is not, as the editor points out in her introduction, a history of costume in cinema, or a history of the spectacular use of costume, its range of references is diverse and often illuminating. They utilise Tom Gunning's concept of the 'cinema of attractions'; histories of 19th-century theatre, including féeries and magic theatre; the rise of the costume designer; orientalism; dance; art and design; histories of magic; ideas about the materiality of film and its affinity to fabric; and, of course, fashion and its enduring and productive relationship with film and film costume.

Sweet plumage: Annabelle performs the serpentine dance in 1896; queer finery in *Pink Narcissus*

By positing these three, perhaps unexpected, periods together, the editor and the contributors' essays present a range of themes and concerns in relation to the use of cinematic costume across a broad historical span. For example, the relationship between costume, gender and performance is picked up in different ways across the book's essays, from the butterfly women who exact revenge on predatory males in films such as *La Peine du talion* (Gaston Velle, 1906) to the way in which queer experimental filmmakers like Jack Smith and actor/costumier Mario Montez used decadent, highly stylised visions of studio-era stars to forge new identities and question the performativity of gender in films such as *Flaming Creatures* and *Normal Love* (both 1963).

The book demonstrates how film, as a medium of motion and light, is perfectly suited to represent the qualities of fabric and fur

The book itself is a feast for the eyes. It's beautifully designed by Laurenz Brunner Studio and richly illustrated with some eye-popping finery on display. As well as using standard in-text illustrations, it takes a stylistically ambitious approach in presenting a number of frame and production stills at the beginning of each section in metallic inks on black paper. While these perhaps occasionally sacrifice some of the nuances of tone and shading of the original images, they make up for it by creating a seductive, shimmering interlude between the book's three main sections. For me this is the publishing equivalent of the fashion or dance interludes that pause the narrative of films of the 1920s-1940s, such as *The Women* (1939), creating a moment in which to sit back and revel in an aesthetic of pure visual pleasure. This is entirely appropriate for a book that itself celebrates and interrogates these moments in which the visual qualities of costume come to the fore.

Ultimately, *Birds of Paradise* offers a well-written and richly researched collection of essays that are admirably gathered together in a coherent whole, providing fresh, stimulating and productive reflections on the use of costume across a diverse range of individual titles and moments in film history.

BELA TARR, THE TIME AFTER

By Jacques Rancière, Univocal Publishing, 90pp, $19.95, ISBN 9781937561154

THE INTELLIGENCE OF A MACHINE

By Jean Epstein, Univocal Publishing, 105pp, $19.95, ISBN 9781937561185

Reviewed by Nick James

"This work was composed in Kabel and Trajan... The paper is Mohawk Via, Pure White Linen..." I could go on because this review is partly a tribute to Univocal, a publisher with whose books I am besotted, as much for their gorgeous design as for their shortish philosophical contents. Titles such as Vilém Flusser's *Post-History* and François Laruelle's *Philosophy and Non-Philosophy* (don't ask) are their regular fare, but lately they have put out two key filmic booklets, Jacques Rancière's *Béla Tarr, the Time After* and Jean Epstein's *The Intelligence of a Machine*. So beautifully are these booklets produced, and so often are they brilliant white, that one doesn't want to take them out of their cellophane envelopes. My Rancière is already scuffed and stained; the Epstein I've tried to preserve; the act of reading here is destructive of a purity.

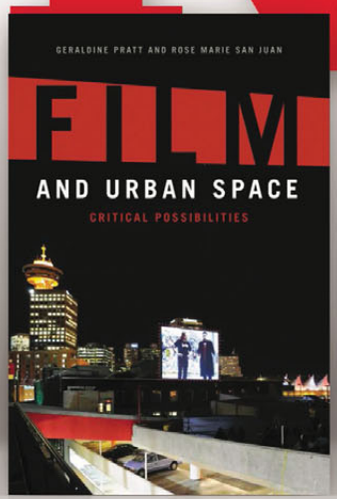
But it is worth it. I've not read anything as penetrating on Tarr as Rancière's intricate argument here in support of the director's own insistence that his latterday cinema (from *Damnation* onwards) is a continuation of the earlier work, which seems, superficially, more interested in social realism (from *The Prefab People* to *Almanac of Fall*). Rancière traces the evolution of Tarr's formal strategies as the films gradually shed the paraphenalia of bureaucratic intransigence to concentrate ever more on "men and women... called upon... to incarnate expectations, lassitudes, disenchantments, in which their own experience is expressed... in the connection between words, times, spaces, refrains, gestures, objects" or what Rancière calls "the circulation of affects".

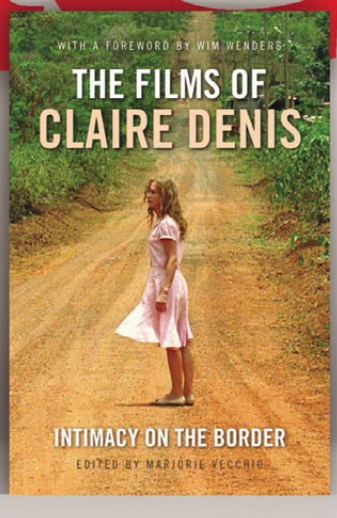
The Intelligence of a Machine is a new translation of a 1946 work, and very welcome considering how few of Epstein's texts have been translated into English. Its meditations on time and '*photogénie*' (which the translator describes as "a holistic experience of reality, mediation and the self all rolled into one") would seem to relate directly to Rancière's elaboration of the kind of time depicted by Tarr's films, "the time of pure material events, against which belief will be measured for as long as life will sustain it".

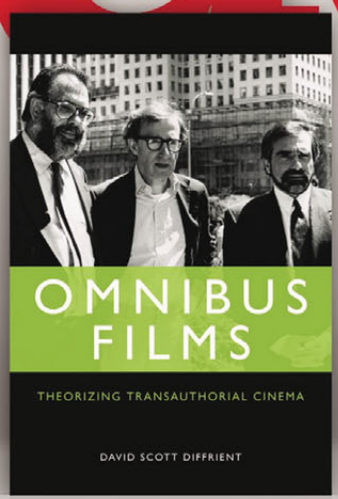
Béla Tarr's *Damnation*

'SERPENTINE DANCE: NOUVEAU MUSEE DE MONACO/PINK NARCISSUS: BFI NATIONAL ARCHIVE

Read







FILM AND URBAN SPACE

Critical Possibilities

By Geraldine Pratt & Rose Marie San Juan, Edinburgh University Press, paperback, 256pp, illustrated, £19.99, ISBN 9780748623846

Film and Urban Space traces recurring debates about what constitutes film's political potential and argues that the relation between film and urban space has been crucial to these discussions and their historical transformations. The book demonstrates that certain recurring prescriptions – shooting on location, disrupting normalising time, experimenting with memory, interlinking the spaces of screen and cinema – draw on the relation between film and urban space as a kind of laboratory.

A range of films, from Dziga Vertov's 1929 *Man with a Movie Camera* to Jia Zhangke's 2008 *24 City*, are discussed in depth, each offering an argument for how the encounter between specific manifestations of modern urban space and politically engaged film strategies has served to challenge the status quo and stimulate critical thinking.

www.euppublishing.com

THE FILMS OF CLAIRE DENIS

Intimacy on the Border

Edited by Marjorie Vecchio, Foreword by Wim Wenders, I.B. Tauris, paperback, 288pp, £16.99, ISBN 9781848859548

The films of Claire Denis, one of the most challenging and respected of contemporary filmmakers, probe the psyche of global citizenship, tracing the borderlines of family, desire, nationality and power. With subtlety, depth and at times minimalism and abstraction, her films – including *Chocolat*, *Beau travail* and *White Material* – explore connections between national experience and individual circumstance, visualising the complications of such dualities. Following a foreword by Wim Wenders, the book explores the themes Denis addresses in her films, and features original interviews with the director as well as an editor, actor and two composers most familiar with her working style to reveal fresh facets of this intrepid filmmaker.

www.ibtauris.com

OMNIBUS FILMS

Theorizing Transauthorial Cinema

By David Scott Diffrient, Edinburgh University Press, paperback, 288pp, illustrated, £24.99, ISBN 9780748695669

As the first book-length exploration of internationally distributed, multi-director episode films, David Scott Diffrient's *Omnibus Films: Theorizing Transauthorial Cinema* fills a considerable gap in the history of world cinema and aims to expand understandings of authorship, genre, narrative, and transnational production and reception. Delving into a range of case studies from *If I Had a Million* (1932) and *Dead of Night* (1945) to *Paris, je t'aime* (2006), this book covers much conceptual ground and crosses narrative as well as national borders in much the same way that omnibus films do.

Omnibus Films is a particularly thought-provoking book for those working in the fields of auteur theory, film genre and transnational cinema, and is suitable for advanced students in cinema studies.

www.euppublishing.com

MARNIE

By Murray Pomerance, BFI Film Classics Series, BFI Publishing/Palgrave Macmillan, paperback, 96pp, illustrated, £12.99, ISBN 9781844576548

A thrilling tale of anxiety and moral extremity, *Marnie* (1964) cemented Alfred Hitchcock's reputation as a master of suspense and the visual form. Murray Pomerance weaves critical discussion together with production history to reveal Marnie as a woman in flight from her self, her past, her love and the watching eyes of others. Challenging many received opinions – including claims of technical sloppiness and the proposal that Marnie's wedding night is a 'rape scene' – Pomerance sheds new light on a film that can often be difficult to understand and accept on its own terms. Original and stimulating, this BFI Film Classic identifies *Marnie* as one of Hitchcock's masterpieces, highlights the film's philosophical and psychological sensitivity, and reveals its sharp-eyed understanding of American society and its mores.

http://tinyurl.com/mmr7pbo

FELLOWSHIPS IN VISUAL ARTS
2015–2016

The Radcliffe Institute for Advanced Study invites applications for funded residential fellowships from distinguished visual artists. Fellowships for visual artists are awarded by the Radcliffe Institute, and fellowships for film, video, sound, and new media artists are awarded jointly by the Radcliffe Institute and the Film Study Center at Harvard University.

Deadline: October 1, 2014
For more information:
www.radcliffe.harvard.edu
www.filmstudycenter.org
Radcliffe Application Office
8 Garden Street
Cambridge, MA 02138 USA
617-496-1324
fellowships@radcliffe.harvard.edu

RADCLIFFE INSTITUTE
FOR ADVANCED STUDY
HARVARD UNIVERSITY

SECRET HISTORY
OF FILM MUSIC
IN THE WIRE ARCHIVE

thewire.co.uk

BFI
Film
Forever

电·影
ELECTRIC
SHADOWS
中英电影盛典
China & UK
film celebration
2014

ELECTRIC SHADOWS – A CENTURY OF CHINESE CINEMA

Explore the illustrious history of Chinese cinema in this new compendium. 140 pages of lavishly illustrated new essays, written by many of the foremost authorities in the field.

ON SALE NOW FOR £16.99
FROM bfi.org.uk/shop

LEARN FILMMAKING & ACTING FOR FILM

NEW YORK FILM ACADEMY

School of Film • Acting • Television • Producing • Photography

The Most Hands-on Intensive Programs in the World

16mm • 35mm • Hi-Def • RED EPIC® • Super 16mm • HDSLR

+1-212-674-4300 | WWW.NYFA.EDU

BACHELOR OF FINE ARTS • BACHELOR OF ARTS
TWO-YEAR MASTER OF FINE ARTS • ONE-YEAR MASTER OF ARTS
ASSOCIATE OF FINE ARTS • ONE & TWO-YEAR CONSERVATORY

SHORT-TERM HANDS-ON INTENSIVE WORKSHOPS AVAILABLE YEAR-ROUND

All BFA, BA, MFA, MA, and AFA degree programs are only offered at the New York Film Academy Los Angeles campus.

@NewYorkFilmAcademy @NewYorkFilmAcademy @NewYorkFilmAcademy @NYFA

NEW YORK CITY • LOS ANGELES, SHOOTING ON THE BACKLOT OF UNIVERSAL STUDIOS • ABU DHABI, UAE
AUSTRALIA • FLORENCE • SOUTH BEACH • HARVARD UNIVERSITY* • DISNEY STUDIOS* • PARIS* • JAPAN* • KOREA* • CHINA* • INDIA*

All workshops are solely owned and operated by the New York Film Academy and are not affiliated with Universal Studios, Harvard University, or Disney Studios. *Summer only.*

identify:

LastExitToNowhere.com

Hand screen printed film inspired T-shirts and apparel

The T-shirts featured are inspired by: 1: Raiders of the Lost Ark. 02: Jaws. 03/04: Dredd. 05: Back to the Future. 06: Alien. 07: Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind. 08: Escape from New York. 09: Aliens. 10: The Lost Boys. 11: The Texas Chainsaw Massacre. 12: Back to the Future. 13: Star Wars. 14: Aliens. 15: The Fog. 16: Goodfellas. 17: Westworld. 18: The Omen. 19: The Man Who Fell Fell to Earth. 20: Leon. 21: Donnie Darko. 22: Every Which Way But Loose. 23: Cuban Fury. 24: Starship Troopers. 25: The Shining. 26: The Return of the Living Dead. 27: Berberian Sound Studio. 28: The Last Starfighter. 29: Blade Runner. 30: Robocop. 31: Predator. 32: Sightseers. 33. Kill List. 34: Old Boy. 35: Fictional Spacecrafts. 36: The Dark Knight. 37: Raiders of the Lost Ark. 38: Local Hero. 39: Dog Soldiers. 40: Army of Darkness. 41: Blade Runner. 42: Soylent Green. 43: Shaun of the Dead. 44: Alien. 45: Jurassic Park. 46: Indiana Jones and the Temple of Doom. 47: Withnail and I. 48: The Thing. 49: Troll Hunter. 50: Enter the Dragon. 51: 2001: A Space Odyssey. 52: Jaws. 53: Oh Brother, Where Art Thou?. 54: Close Encounters of the Third Kind. 55. Robots. 56: Fargo. 57: Raiders of the Lost Ark. 58: Alien 3. 59: Dead Man's Shoes. 60: They Live. 61: A Field in England. 62: The Terminator. 63: Rocky. 64: Ghostbusters. 65: American Psycho. 66: Big Lebowski. 67: The Goonies. 68: Back to the Future. 69: An American Werewolf in London. 70: The Godfather. 71: Blade Runner. 72: The Usual Suspects.

Indentify with us: TWITTER: @LastEXITshirts FACEBOOK: facebook.com/LastExitToNowhere

READERS' LETTERS

Letters are welcome, and should be addressed to the Editor at Sight & Sound, BFI, 21 Stephen Street, London W1T 1LN
Fax: 020 7436 2327 Email: S&S@bfi.org.uk

OBSCURE OBJECT OF DESIRE?

Unhappy with Patricia A. DeMaio's biography of Simone Signoret (Books, *S&S*, July), Ginette Vincendeau would have her "rise above the evidence" of her subject's "abject devotion" to her faithless husband, Yves Montand, the better to "relate Signoret's predicament... to gender politics". Does Vincendeau mean to suggest that Signoret's acceptance of Montand's philandering was nothing but a submission to the rule of patriarchy? If so, what was it Sinatra submitted to during his marriage to the similarly faithless Ava Gardner? Vincendeau says there was a "contradiction between [Signoret's] intelligence and huge talent" and her love of Montand. But very few people are rational about their own life, and nobody can be rational about their desires. Vincendeau says DeMaio's book is "short on analysis". From the evidence, DeMaio seems analytic enough. It is Vincendeau who, hoop-jumping through the ideological clichés of the age, sells her subject short.
Christopher Bray *London*

OFF-COLOUR ANIMATION

One of the disappointing aspects of *Sight & Sound* is the poor coverage given to animation. While Miyazaki's latest film did receive extended coverage ('Free falling', *S&S*, June), it seems that, by and large, animation is still regarded as something only for children. Most animated films receive cursory reviews. Only too typical is Nick Pinkerton's review of *How to Train Your Dragon 2* (*S&S*, August).

In his short piece, Pinkerton describes Valka's dragon sanctuary as like "a puddle of sick", with its mix of "all the colours known in the natural world". This is not accurate – the dominant colour scheme is actually green and white. There are many environments in the film, with, for example, a series of variations played on the 'whiteness' of ice; but, having misconstrued one scene, Pinkerton proceeds to castigate the whole film as a "rainbow" *mélange*.

This is not to say that *How to Train Your Dragon 2* is a masterpiece; but it would repay more thoughtful consideration. It would help if *S&S* employed someone to review animated films who is a specialist in the medium. And what about a regular column on the topic?
David Allen *Birmingham*

HOBSON'S CHOICE

You quote Picturehouse Cinemas' chief booker Clare Binns as saying, "We have to offer our customers a choice." (The Numbers, *S&S*, August) But it's a very limited choice in Edinburgh's Cameo Cinema, part of the Picturehouse chain. This cinema used to show foreign-language films on a regular basis, with one performance each day from Monday to Friday. Now it has one showing a week under its 'Discover Tuesdays' programme. Too bad if you have another appointment on a Tuesday – the film has gone.
Michael Bailey *Edinburgh*

LETTER OF THE MONTH
HISTORY IN BLACK AND WHITE

In her memoir *A Parallel Life*, Bonnie Greer describes how Shirley Bassey empowered her and other young African-American women in the early 1960s. Imagine the impact Bassey would have had if the British film industry had given her a chance. Apart from singing a few Bond themes, Bassey has been ignored. There was a possibility of her co-starring as Nancy in *Oliver!* (1968) – its director Carol Reed wanted her – but it was not to be.

Until Amma Asante's *Belle*, British filmmakers have excluded black women from historical cinema, an exception being Jack Gold's *The Sailor's Return* (above). Set in the mid-Victorian era in Dorset, it tells the story of the love between an English sailor and his African wife. Gold's 1978 film was made with loving care and meticulous attention to detail. Brian Tufano's cinematography and Carl Davis's original music score were outstanding. But though the film was screened successfully at various festivals, it was not theatrically released and ended up on television.

The absence of Britain's black community from British historical cinema may be a symptom of the 'colour-blind' discourse around race and racism prevalent in much of white Britain today – including among filmmakers. They believe that by refusing to acknowledge a person's race they are being non-racist. Nothing could be further from the truth: for to refuse to acknowledge a person's race is to deny their history, culture and identity.
Stephen Bourne By email

INFLUENCES AND INSPIRATIONS

In your article about *A Hard Day's Night* ('Band on the run', *S&S*, August), it seemed one influence was missed, and one future inspiration. The influence was *The Goon Show*, one of the biggest radio comedies of the 1950s, which would still have been fresh in the minds of the Fab Four, as well as the young filmmaker Richard Lester and writer Alun Owen.

Later, *Monty Python's Flying Circus* used tropes and situations seen in the film, and their use of the surreal and offbeat mirrors many of its episodes.
Kevin Rawlings *Clevedon*

SPOILING FOR A FIGHT

Roland Moore's plea ('Spoiled rotten', Letters, *S&S*, July) to ban spoilers from *S&S* reviews, even when a 'spoiler alert' notice has been posted, pushes the recent campaign for 'safe place' reviewing into strange new territory.

1. It advances the doctrine that reader response/sensitivity morally trumps the critical responsibility to the work of art – that the critic's primary task is not to present the work of art, but to protect the reader.

2. It assumes that what one person perceives as a 'spoiler' will be a spoiler for everyone. Or, conversely, that the reader who is most spoiler-sensitive should control the content delivered to everyone else.

3. It elicits a modest proposal: that anyone who uses the word spoiler – as others might use 'values' or 'robust' to define fields of discourse before the discourse – should undertake a simple mental exercise. Whenever they see the word 'spoiler', they should substitute the word 'understander'.
John Clute *London*

RIGHT ALL ALONG

A more prosaic explanation of Norman Bates's ambidexterity is offered in Robert Graysmith's *The Girl in Alfred Hitchcock's Shower* ('Sinister cinema', *S&S*, August). When the shower scene was being filmed, left-handed Anthony Perkins was in New York rehearsing for a Broadway musical. Two (right-handed) stunt doubles replaced him – Margo Epper is seen heading towards the shower with knife raised and Anne Dore wields the knife during the actual murder.
Terry Hanstock *Nottingham*

Additions and corrections

August p.64 *Norte, the End of History*, Certificate 15, 250m 28s; p.71 *Finding Vivian Maier*, Certificate 12A, 84m 4s; p.73 *Hide Your Smiling Faces*, Certificate 15, 80m 11s; p.75 *I Am Divine*, Certificate 15 89m 55s; p.85 *A Promise*, Certificate 12A, 98m 18s; p.87 *SuperMensch The Legend of Shep Gordon*, Certificate 15, 85m 2s

BFI NATIONAL ARCHIVE (1)

ENDINGS...

THE THIN BLUE LINE

Errol Morris's unravelling of a murder case starts off controlled and stylised – then the temperature drops from cool to chilling

By Michael Brooke

There are many reasons why Errol Morris's *The Thin Blue Line* (1988) is a great documentary. Firstly, it's a model of rigorous investigative journalism. The former private detective examined forensically the evidence surrounding the 1976 murder of police officer Robert Wood and demonstrated that the conviction of Randall Dale Adams was badly flawed: a retrial was ordered, Dallas County's district attorney found himself unable to assemble a fresh prosecution case, and the year after the film came out Adams was released.

In 2006, *Variety* described the film as "the most political work of cinema in the last 20 years". But far from being an angry polemic, *The Thin Blue Line* is an immaculately controlled and stylised piece, lit like a commercial feature and set to Philip Glass's lulling ostinatos (less ubiquitous then than now) instead of something truer to place and period. Contributors directly address the camera, instead of a visible or audible interviewer, and locations and objects are framed with similar care. This approach was subsequently used not only in Morris's later films but in a slew of 'true crime' documentaries that followed in *The Thin Blue Line*'s wake; in 1988, though, it was more unusual.

Morris was initially much criticised for his stylised approach; he retorted that available-light handheld 16mm doesn't make something more intrinsically 'truthful' than a painstaking 35mm reconstruction. Similarly, he defended his re-enactments of events by saying that they were never intended to convince audiences of what actually happened – rather, they illustrated claims made by individual witnesses, which may or may not have been reliable. And sometimes they weren't: Morris showed that the five key prosecution witnesses may have committed perjury. (Adams's lawyer Randy Schaffer used a cinematic metaphor when he later said that the witnesses "forgot the script they learned for the trial" when Morris interviewed them several years later.)

But the film also stands out for its ending, dominated by one David Harris, who in the immediate aftermath of the murder was the chief suspect. But – in an echo of the notorious 1952 Craig and Bentley case in Britain – Harris was a minor, which meant that if he were convicted Texas would be unable to execute him; when he obligingly accused Adams of the murder, the authorities gladly switched their focus. Harris's is the final face that we see, as he concludes a narrative of family tragedy: "I think maybe a lot of the things I did when I was younger was an attempt to get back at [my father] or something, you know, for the way he treated me. But I wasn't doing nothing but hurting myself." At this point Morris cuts to a picture of Harris as an almost stereotypically cherubic blond child.

The film could have ended here, implying that Harris used Adams as a surrogate for the father that he had long resented. It's a viable conclusion, if a bit dollar-book Freud, and it probably wouldn't have lessened the film's impact or importance – not least because Morris stressed that it wasn't the film that helped secure Adams's release but the findings of his investigation. (Adams himself died a free man in 2010, 31 years after his execution was originally scheduled.)

Few films show a keener awareness of the tragic collision between the fragility of human life and pure happenstance

But three minutes pass before the end credits. We never see Harris again, but we hear his voice in a follow-up interview, a transcription superimposed over close-ups of an Olympus L-200 mini-cassette dictating machine. Although this seems of a piece with the stylisation elsewhere, it was forced by circumstance: following technical problems with his camera, Morris had to record his final interview on tape (unusually, we also hear Morris as inquisitor). Serendipitously, this adds a chilling distance to Harris's contribution: far from the genial, almost matey figure we've just been watching, the crackly voice is now more or less openly confessing to an actual murder. When Morris asks whether he thinks Adams is innocent, Harris replies "I'm sure he is. 'Cause I'm the one that knows."

Rewatching the film after Harris's execution in 2004, the temperature drops further – because he's now speaking from beyond the grave, and because the 1985 murder for which he was ultimately convicted would not have happened had it not been for the original miscarriage of justice. *The Thin Blue Line* is not an anti-capital punishment tract *per se* (neither is Krzysztof Kieślowski's contemporaneous *A Short Film About Killing*); but few films show a keener awareness of the tragic collision between the fragility of human life and pure happenstance: Adams and the murdered police officer Wood were simply in the wrong place at the wrong time.

BFI Film Forever

NEW RELEASES

THE CHANGES

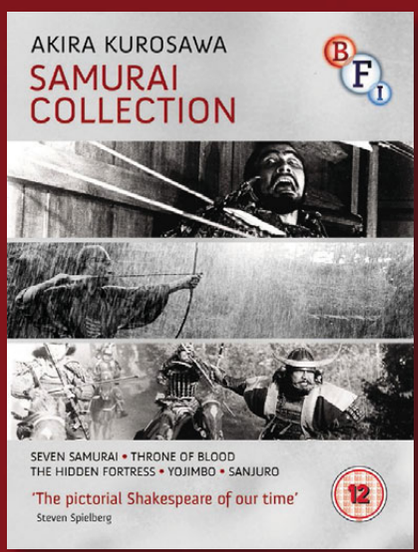
2-DVD SET

First time on DVD for the cult 1970s BBC science-fiction series based on Peter Dickinson's best-selling trilogy.

THE BOY FROM SPACE

2-DVD SET

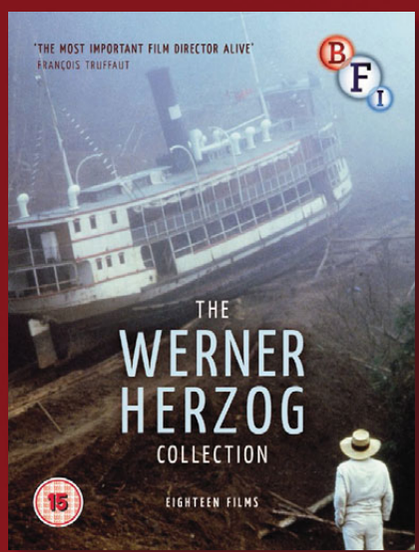
The long-awaited DVD release of this classic BBC sci-fi series, featuring all 10 episodes of the 1980 broadcast, the original 1972 LP audio, and specially prepared presentations of the original drama sequences.



KUROSAWA: SAMURAI COLLECTION

BLU-RAY BOX SET

Collector's edition includes newly remastered transfers of *Seven Samurai*, *Throne of Blood*, *Hidden Fortress*, *Yojimbo* and *Sanjuro*.



THE WERNER HERZOG COLLECTION

BLU-RAY & DVD BOX SETS

Deluxe box set with 18 newly remastered films plus rare shorts, classic documentaries, director commentaries and much more.

bfi.org.uk

Available from amazon.co.uk

A PECCADILLO PICTURES RELEASE

WAKOLDA.CO.UK

FROM THE DIRECTOR OF XXY

WAKOLDAFILM

"MENGELE INSPIRES FEAR. WAKOLDA WRAPS HIS EVIL STORY IN AN ENIGMATIC THRILLER - A BRILLIANT CONCEIT"

★★★★ FILMUFORIA

★★★★ ALLAN HUNTER, THE EXPRESS

★★★★ TV TIMES

"STRIKING AND ACHIINGLY TENSE... CRAFTS AN ATMOSPHERE OF SECRECY AND MISTURST"

MARK ADAMS, SCREEN INTERNATIONAL

A FILM BY LUCÍA PUENZO

WAKOLDA

INSPIRED BY TRUE EVENTS

Release Supported By

JOURNEY LATIN AMERICA

IN CINEMAS AUG 8

CURZON VICTORIA · CURZON MAYFAIR · Picture house · RITZY · ODEON COVENT GARDEN · SHOWROOM WORKSTATION · TRICYCLE THEATRE · PHOENIX CINEMA · QFT · GFT Glasgow Film Theatre

CORNERHOUSE · WATERSHED · broadway · FILMHOUSE

PECCAPICS.COM